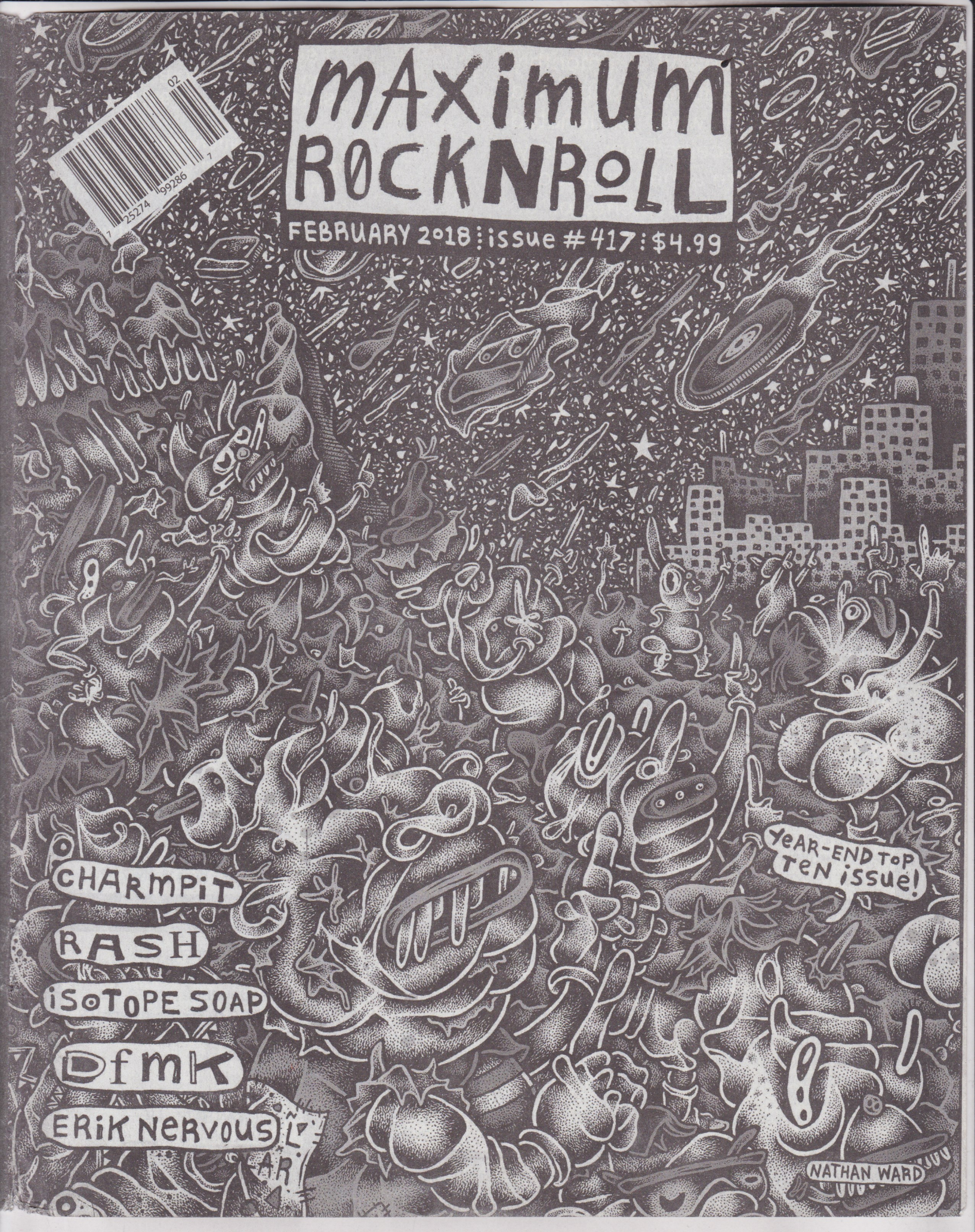
MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL
FEBRUARY 2018 : ISSUE #417 : $4.99
CHARMPIT
RASH
ISOTOPE SOAP
DFMK
ERIK NERVOUS
YEAR-END TOP TEN ISSUE!
NATHAN WARD

Maximum Rocknroll is a monthly magazine, continuously published since 1982. All work is donated and no one receives any salary. All proceeds are either invested in technological improvments or go to other similarly minded not-for-profit projects. Anyone is welcome to reprint anything from **MRR**, but only if it is not-for-profit.

Send records, demos, zines, and letters to PO Box 460760 San Francisco, CA 94146-0760

Send interviews, articles, scene reports, photos, and ads to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com.

Call us on the phone between 10AM and 10PM PST at (415) 923-9814.

More information at our website: maximumrocknroll.com

TOP TENS

Some of our contributors' top ten (or so) things we've reviewed this month. For review consideration, send two copies of vinyl, or one copy of CD-only or demo releases to our PO Box. We review independent punk, garage, and hardcore releases—no major labels!

GRACE AMBROSE

AMERICAN HATE – LP
NOSFERATU – CS
MURO – Ataque Hardcore Punk 12"
SUICIDE – First Rehearsal Tapes LP
VANILLA POPPERS – LP
GUTARA KYO – 10"
LUMPY AND THE DUMPERS – LP
TALC – live
UV RACE – live
BB & THE BLIPS – live

MATT BADENHOP

NOSFERATU – CS
STIMULUS – CS
DAS DRIP – CS
MURO – Ataque Hardcore Punk 12"
KENNY KENNY OH OH – LP
KOHTI TUHOA – LP
LUMPY AND THE DUMPERS – LP
PUBLIC EYE – Relaxing Favorites LP
RAZOR BOYS – LP
YLEISET SYYT – LP

MITCH CARDWELL

LARS FINBERG – LP
THE WORLD – First World Record LP
THE STALLION – 3xLP
LUMPY AND THE DUMPERS – LP
GUTARA KYO – 10"
GEN POP – On The Screen EP
SUICIDE – First Rehearsal Tapes LP
DAN MELCHIOR – LP
DAY CREEPER – LP
VANILLA POPPERS – LP

ROBERT COLLINS

MURO – Ataque Hardcore Punk 12"
AMERICAN HATE – LP
NO ACCÍON – live / HEXIS – 10" + CD
YLEISET SYYT – LP
INTERCISION – demo CS
PUBLIC EYE – Relaxing Favorites LP
HUMMINGBIRD OF DEATH – LP
FINAL OBSOLESCENCIA – 12"
FAST ASLEEP – live
PERIKATO – Kuka Hyötyy? LP

JOAN DETORO

NOSFERATU – CS
LIQUIDS – Heart Beats True EP
THE WORLD – First World Record LP
LUMPY AND THE DUMPERS – LP
NIGHT WITCH – Discography LP
MURO – Ataque Hardcore Punk 12"
HARAM – LP
U-NIX – Star EP
VANILLA POPPERS – LP
SUICIDE – First Rehearsal Tapes LP

LAYLA GIBBON

THE WORLD –First World Record LP
SUICIDE – First Rehearsal Tapes LP
HELTA SKELTA – Nightclubbin' EP
HARAM – LP
PUBLIC EYE – Relaxing Favorites LP
LARS FINBERG – LP
GEN POP – On The Screen EP
GUTARA KYO – 10" / LUMPY LP
THE SUBURBAN HOMES – 45
MURO – Ataque Hardcore Punk 12"

DAN GOETZ

VANILLA POPPERS – LP
LIQUIDS – Heart Beats True EP
THE SUBURBAN HOMES – 45
THE WORLD – First World Record LP
HARAM – LP
PROVOKE – live
KHIIS – live
HELTA SKELTA – Nightclubbin EP
AMERICAN HATE – LP
HEAVY LIDS – 45

GREG HARVESTER

JUST BUSTED – CS
HARAM – LP
THE SUBURBAN HOMES – 45
PROTRUDERS – CS
VANILLA POPPERS – LP
LUMPY AND THE DUMPERS – LP
U-NIX – Star EP
HASH REDACTOR – CS
LIQUIDS – Heart Beats True EP
SUICIDE – First Rehearsal Tapes LP

RAY LUJAN

BOTOX RATS – Nasty Business LP
DAY CREEPER – LP
EIGHT – EP / DAG NASTY – live
GUITAR GANGSTERS – LP
HIP PRIESTS / PAGANS – split EP
PUBLIC EYE – Relaxing Favorites LP
SUSPECT PARTS – LP
TELEPATHIC – Self Checkout LP
TIGER TOUCH – EP
YOUNG LADIES – EP

FRED SCHRUNK

THE WORLD – First World Record LP
HARAM – LP
VANILLA POPPERS – LP
LUMPY AND THE DUMPERS – LP
GEN POP – On The Screen EP
SURFBOART – Boart To Death EP
THE COWBOYS – LP
U-NIX – Star EP
THE SUBURBAN HOMES – 45
WARP – live

KENNY KAOS

TELEPATHIC – Self Checkout LP
GUITAR GANGSTERS – LP
SFH – Kinda Suck LP
THE COWBOYS – LP
EJECTOR SEATS – LP
THE SUBURBAN HOMES – 45
HEAVY LIDS – 45
LIQUIDS – Heart Beats True EP
GEN POP – On The Screen EP
KENNY KENNY OH OH – LP

MARISSA MAGIC

SUICIDE – First Rehearsal Tapes LP
LUMPY AND THE DUMPERS – LP
THE WORLD – First World Record LP
AMERICAN HATE – LP
GEN POP – On The Screen EP
THE STALLION – 3xLP
VANILLA POPPERS – LP
VANKMEN – Live
HAND & LEG – LP
GAD WHIP – In a Room LP

CAROLYN KEDDY

DES DEMONAS – LP
MONSIEURS – Deux LP
LIQUIDS – Heart Beats True EP
SUBURBAN HOMES – 45
GEN POP – EP / THE WORLD – LP
PUBLIC EYE – Relaxing Favorites LP
BEN EDGE & THE ELECTRIC PENCILS – LP
HEAVY LIDS – 45
KENNY KENNY OH OH – LP
LOWLIFE – Leaders EP

ROTTEN RON READY

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GUTARA KYO – 10"
UNRULY BOYS – Bloodshot EP
U-NIX – Star EP
FINAL – Obsolenscencia Humana LP
LAPIN HELVETTI – LP
THE WORLD – First World Record LP
LUMPY AND THE DUMPERS – LP
SURFBOART – Boart To Death EP

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This is a contributor-driven magazine. We need help writing reviews, editing, doing layouts, processing mail, maintaining our archive, and more.

Wanna be a shitworker?
Write mrr@maximumrocknroll.com.

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MRR has access to some of the lowest international postal rates offered by the USPS. If you have a distro, want to sell *MRR* at shows, or just want to get cheaper copies for friends by buying wholesale, email distro@maximumrocknroll.com for more details.

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ISSUE #417

Concealed Blade. Photo by Farrah Skeiky

OUR YEAR-END TOP TEN ISSUE

We're looking for a distribution coordinator! Do you have the patience to deal with the USPS? The persistence to chase down money from forgetful punks? A love of spreadsheets and desire to spread inky thumbprints around the world? Contact us.

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Subscriptions, back issues, records, shirts and more can be purchased at our webstore: store.maximumrocknroll.com

We will not accept ads from major labels or bands with exclusive distribution through major-owned distros. Information about advertising can be found at maximumrocknroll.com/ads.

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2017's greatest hits.

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We're not going to spoil them for you.

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Swedish punks defend synthesizers.

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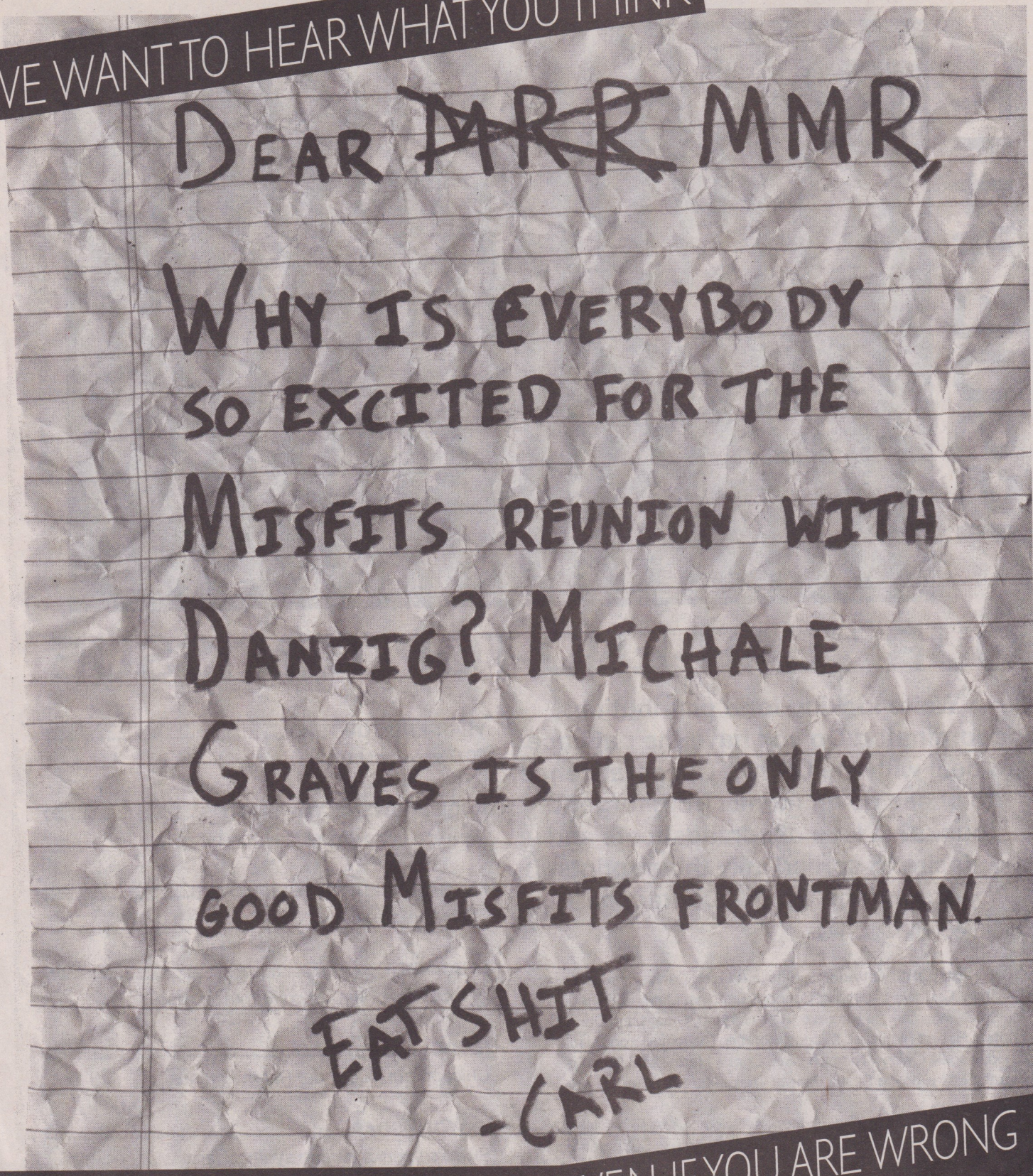
Tijuana's got NMA.

ERIK NERVOUS.....83
What makes him nervous?

WE WANT TO HEAR WHAT YOU THINK



...EVEN IF YOU ARE WRONG

Send your letters to
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mrr@maximumrocknroll.com

LETTERS

Send letters to PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146 USA or to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. Letters may be edited for length. Response not guaranteed.

I was reading *MRR* on my way to work today. On page 7, you correctly said that The Exploited's lead singer has a swastika tattoo and, on page 8, you stated your policy of No Platform.

I was surprised to find Combat 84 quoted on page 14. In Britain, this band has an association with the far-right. Their reputation might have been exaggerated by the similarity in name to a neo-Nazi terrorist group called Combat 18, but they seem worse than The Exploited by any measure. They were dropped by their label for their appearance on the BBC Arena series where Chris Henderson expressed some negative views about racial harmony and mocked allegations of police brutality against Blacks. Deptford John seemed to have some more considered views, bit didn't strongly disagree with Chris.

It says on the German Wikipedia that the National Front's record label wanted to sign them, but they fell out over a song in support of US nukes in the UK, which the National Front opposed.

If you are going to apply your No Platform policy consistently, I don't think that you should be quoting lyrics by Combat 84, even if the particular lyrics quoted are not objectionable.

Thanks,
Ed Aveyard

Hello Ed!

I don't care to spend much time defending Combat 84. Why bovver? What I will say is the band produced zero racist product. They recorded two EPs for Victory—a sublabel of Syndicate Records. Victory leased those recordings and some bootlegs to Rock-O-Rama for the creation of an LP without the band's consent and Combat 84 broke up that same year. Regarding "objectionable lyrics" (the Punx Music Resource Center, yeah?), the band was anti-Communist and patriotic. They also sang about going to jail, hating cops, being violent, being skinheads, living on the dole, and a desire for the UK to institute capitol punishment for rapists (one of the catchiest Oi! tunes ever, in my opinion). Pretty standard for early '80s Oi!

Here's my standard line when punx assign guilt by association to Oi! and skinhead music: I critique art based on the work of art, not on the artist. That's not saying I don't hold an opinion about the creator of the work. I will play Combat 84's music at home, but I won't host "Chubby" Chris's ghost for tea—even though he died in 2013. Those positions are dissimilar. Whether MRR *makes that distinction as well or has me place Combat 84 in the pile of "verboten" bands that shall not be named is of no real consequence to me. My column exists in their world and I play by their rules (silent football).*

Thanks for reading "Still the New Breed" and taking the time to write to MRR.

—Turbo! Jorgensen
AmericanBootGang@Gmail.com

Punks, skins, crusties, everyone...

Pretty passive boy looking for fine, cute boy for sex, communication, exchanging addresses.

Write to:
Motti Pierluigi
V. Verdi 16
42124 Reggio Emilia ITALY
Telephone: 0039 327 388 7788

Hi Motti,

You may be the first person in a long, long time to submit a personal ad. We stopped running the personal ads (along with other classifieds) back when internet dating became much, much more popular and easily accessible. That being said, we are happy to help you out. Be safe!

— Joan DeToro

SHITWORKERS NEEDED

COLUMNISTS

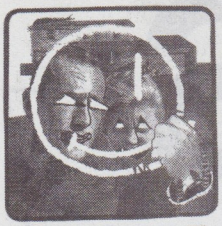
We want some new columnists to write about Hardcore with a capital H, DIY metal, and garage rock, as well as writers from South and Central America, the UK, and Southeast Asia. For consideration, send a sample column and a list of three topics you'd cover in future columns.

SOCIAL MEDIA

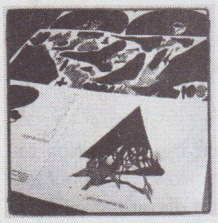
We need a punk who is both the life of the party *and* familiar with *Maximum Rocknroll*'s politics to help helm our social media accounts. If entertaining punks throughout the world sounds like a dream come true, then get in touch!

MRR@MAXIMUMROCKNROLL.COM FOR MORE INFO

IFB Records - newest releases



The Bug - Humbug 7" - wild flailing de Chicago
Rash - Midnight Crooner 7" - Chi punk stomp



v/a Eight Feet Under Vol. 1 DLP - massive international screamo comp.
Landbridge/Autarch LP - FL/SC pummeling crust split - dark, heavy and beastly

Mrtex/Kelut split LP
vicious chaos from 2 screamo outfits - take a dose of the 90's and add the swirling froth of Orchid and bands on React With Protest.

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Please order direct so websites don't get part of our money - ifbrecords@gmail.com

PISSINGMATCH

BREAK THE SEAL7"

16 song e.p. out now on Feral Kid Records

available at revhq.com

and at

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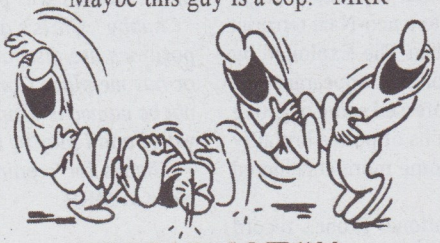
for more music, merch, etc...

Here's what the experts say-

"If you like growly shouting, maybe you'll like this. I dont." -ibuytoomanyrecords.com

"East coast tough guy hardcore..."-MRR

"Maybe this guy is a cop."-MRR



PISSINGMATCH-

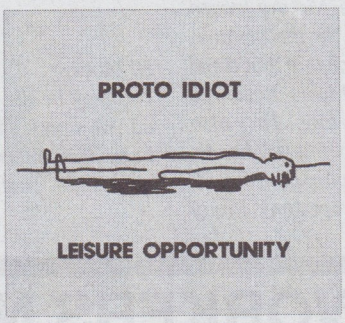
Buy our stuff or we'll beat you up.
Or arrest you. Or something.

OUT NOW AND KNOCKIN' DICKS IN THE DIRT

GŪTARA KYŌ (JP)

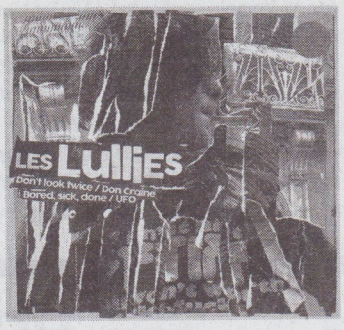
self-titled 10"

PROTO IDIOT (UK)



leisure opportunity lp/cd

LES LULLIES (FR)



don't look twice ep

MONSIEURS (USA)

deux lp

SLOVENLY RECORDINGS

BLACK GLADIATOR

www.slovenly.com

HAND & LEG (GR)

self-titled lp

COLUMNS

This is your *Sykotik Stud* correspondent Kaaotik Mykel here with another missive from Mad Max Boston. A pure leather hello and safety pin salute to all my fans out there! This week's topic will be a little different from the last one ("Was Jesus a Skinhead?"), right now we're gonna be opening a can of worms—and not eat them (40 Oz. Matt will know what I'm talking about with that one!). Ladies and Germs fans, we are going to be talkin' about one of the things that's ruining punk rock: fuckin' safe spaces.

It seems like everytime I go out to Suboxone Alley (best places for shows in Worcester) some purple-haired bozo is telling me "Hey, Kaaotik Mykel, please stop saying women have an extra bone in their hands that make them bad at guitar," and "Please stop complaining that we don't offer a door price discount to Suicide Girls platinum members." It's enough to make a guy eat glue instead of sniffing it! So that's why I've written this list. Now, some of you pussys (oh can I not say that anymore? Sorry! *NOT*!!!) might get pissed. But I don't care.

PUNK IS DEAD if it is not in exact opposition to the mainstream-approved stance on the same issue.

PUNK IS DEAD If the politics are like politics I don't like. Remember last year when all those Canadian bands did a benefit for the Hillary Victory Fund? That shit was fucked up. Now every band is playin' benefit shows for former Vice Presidential Candidate Tim Kaine's daughters college fund...It's enough to make a spike head sick!

PUNK IS DEAD if it no longer has a place for a young person who wants to spray paint the walls, to knock things down, to create hell and get away with it. I say this because ever since ANARCHISTIC DESIRE put out that "Spray Painting Walls is a Crime and So is Knocking Things Down and You Should Not Be Able To Get Away with It That is the Law / Glue Snyffah" 7" I can't even get the old circle A sprayed on a wall here in Beantown!

PUNK IS DEAD if it rejects Chaos in favor of being the enforcers of a moral code. I don't know what I'm really trying to say with this one but I'm just trying to put it out there: I'm for Chaos with a capital-C. You don't like it, piss off mate. *This is a Beantown saying

PUNK IS DEAD if the things Punks once did to provoke or to shock those with mainstream cultural norms, now elicit the same reactions from "Punks" as from church leaders. When I iced my girlfriend in a New York Hotel Room because I was going insane from heroin withdrawals and had been up for a week on speed, a bunch of those dicks in the so-called "Punk Scene" there acted like a gang of church leaders and tossed me on my fanny. Fucking despicable. By the way fanny means "ass" in Boston slang and I won't apologize for saying it.

PUNK IS DEAD if it puts more emphasis on censoring artists, than on an ethos of "say what you want to say". This is important to me which is why I made myself so understandable. What I'm saying is we need to be more homophobic.

PUNK IS DEAD if its aesthetic output cannot offer any countersignal to narcissistic social media posts. Now you might be confused by my choice of "countersignal" here. Countersignal is often used by the alt-right to note they are "countersignaling" Jews, who they claim have hidden their ZOGish messages throughout Western media. All I'm saying here is that punk needs to countersignal (((society))). Nothing to do with fuckin' Jews. I also fuckin' hate Facebook...Sometimes I think that the people with the most friends on Facebook, have the least friends in real life. Food for thought.

PUNK IS DEAD if every "underground" show is on YouTube and Instagram before the show even ends. The biggest threat in my humble opinion ("imho", more Boston slang sorry!) is Instagram. Sure, a lot of you might be fans of STUDS on STUDS, my account where I post slamming pics of the most killer painted leathers. That's different though—I'm a man who appreciates a fuckin smoking studjob.

PUNK IS DEAD if it no longer has any appeal to teenagers who are angry at the world and are eager to tell people that. At its rotten apple core (Boston slang, just means "core") punk is about 55-year-old men (not to give my age away or nothin', and believe me, the glue has kept me looking younger) appealing to the sensibilities of someone who was twelve just two years before. I fucking hate society, but teens? I love them.

***

Listen—if punk is all about just sitting around hating things, sticking safety pins thru our noses, sniffing glue etc etc etc, well, then, ok, fine, yes, you do just that. But what is it you're actually doing, then? Nothing! What are you sacrificing yourself for? Why do these people who exist only on instagram claim to hate it so much?

It's a mistake to think punk in and of itself is an ideology. It's not—it's a kind of rock music (not to say rock music can't be synonymous with ideology: VAN HALEN for example, or SKREWDRIVER, but punk isn't). Punk is a kind of rock and roll music that often is accompanied by certain attitudes of discontent, great, but now what? This is the problem punk ran into. When people stopped being so shocked, then what? GG Allin was, in the final analysis, the end of punk. What can you do worse than him? Kill your old lady? Sound like SKREWDRIVER? If we're just out to offend people, if that's what punk is all about, then anyone over the age of sixteen who still like punk is a certified cretin (this actually turns out to be true but that's just a coincidence).

The hamfisted point I'm trying to make here is that thank Christ the simple turds in WHO KILLED SPIKEY JACKET?, etc, don't get to dictate what the hell punk means. They're apes, going through the motion of making rock and roll—and they can't even do that well! You can say pretty much whatever you want about rock and roll if you're good at making it, but good god this is like a finger painter telling me (the greatest painter of all time, a modern Sistine Chapel Painter genius) how to better smudge the lines on my charcoal drawings of nude figures! They are in the final analysis Renaissance Fair types pretending to be Sid Vicious while the world of punk has moved far past that.

We here at *Maximum Rocknroll* have often been called the "Punk Police." In the past, this label has been argued with. We've had

columnists say it's unfair, that it's taken on the characteristics of an insult. No more. I am the Punk Police and I swear to fucking God if some balding dipshit with a 60-pound jacket on complains to me about safe spaces or acts like a Proud Boy with a mohawk I will shave their entire body, cover it with ancient runes, suspend the offender over a broiling vat of melted KLEENEX records and make love to their pet ferret in front of their weeping eyes.

—KAAOTIK MYKEL
(THE SECOND-TO-LAST PUNK)

The Adult Punk

I turned 27 in July. This is possibly one of the most important milestones for a punk. Either this is the year you die and go out with a bang, you have a crisis and move to a house in the suburbs, or you're stuck in the punk rock limbo for the rest of your adult life.

Before I go on with opening up about my potential quarter life crisis, I'd like to establish a few things about the Copenhagen punk scene in regards to age. This scene has always been viewed as young and rather "adult"-unfriendly, i.e. a scene that's hard to stay in if you have a regular job, a kid, or other ways of life that doesn't fit a young lifestyle. First of all, all shows are all ages. Yes, all shows. While bars can't serve alcohol to anyone under the age of eighteen, minors are allowed in bars and venues serving alcohol. Heck, some even consume alcohol as there is no age limit on alcohol consumption under Denmark's liberal alcohol laws. Denmark's decibel restrictions on concerts are non-existent unlike, for example, neighboring Sweden that has an age limit on "loud" shows. So, in Copenhagen you can get your ears blown out by a 4x12 Marshall cabinet at any age. Yet it's no surprise that there is a gap between the young punks and older punks.

I'm getting used to fitting in the "older punk" category, by age and by lifestyle. Surely it'll seem strange to some of you that I'm in this category at 27, but Copenhagen has always had a young scene and a scene fixated on a young lifestyle, possibly due to the factors stated above. When I go to a show or randomly show up at the Ungdomshuset venue, I'll see the new teenage faces of the "young punks". I'm used to being the youngest one around, since there hasn't been a steady flow of people of younger age to the punk scene until now. So, in this way there is quite a gap between the people my age and the young punks that are at least ten years younger.

The biggest gap is mosh pitting. I'd claim that it's an universal truth that young punks mosh pit like their life depended on it to every single band. I did it, everyone else I know did it and you probably did it too. At some point of physical age or maturity, this skill is lost, or affiliated with intoxication and / or insanity. You join the rest of the "cool punks" in the way too huge half-circle facing the stage, maybe even crossing your arms and showing off your best frown. Being annoyed by the young mosh pitters while you wave their elbows out of your face. Only joining in on the mosh pit when a big local act has a reunion or a popular band from overseas stops by your city. In my case, this includes being slammed down on the floor by guys twice my size (seriously, consider your size and impact, dudes!), and exclaiming that I have gotten too old for mosh pits even though I'm in the best physical shape since my teenage dancer's days. Body age and mental age are disconnected as I'm 27 going on 72.

In fact, I feel absolutely great about growing older. No, 27 isn't old, not even in the punk scene. But I'd say society has a way to idealize a very young body and mind, that makes it seem like there's no life after 22, where you should already be applying anti-wrinkle cream daily and have your pension plan figured out. 27 is much more awesome than 22 or 17. And I can't wait for 35.

I recently had a long conversation with my close friend about how our lives in our late twenties have shaped up to be better in every aspect compared to our early twenties, much to the contrary of what we have been taught to believe. The twenties are a phase of transition, and both our lives have improved a lot thanks to more stable friendships; knowing ourselves, our abilities, and limits; and a somewhat stable economy and the aspects that follow, such as better food on the table and the ability to travel. Basically we have both entered the phase of *real adulthood*, or so we pretend at least. Because heck, when will you ever have your *oh-so-awesome* life together 100%? Now, this *real adulthood* phase crashes with the *true punk* phase. A phase can last for shorter or longer periods of a lifetime and you can be in multiple phases at once. But are punk and adulthood phases that cannot coexist?

To examine this, I'd have to define what punk is. Yeah, you guessed it. I'm not going to do that. There are no lists or cheat sheets to punk, it's always been more of a feeling or a state of mind in a community-based crowd. And, because punk is community based, there's a certain need to interact with that community to exist within punk. In Copenhagen, this interaction occurs mostly at live shows—apart from the interaction with others from the punk community on a personal basis, which I won't consider in this column because I'd probably still see these people even if they stopped being in the punk scene since I value them as people rather than as punks.

I've mentioned this in previous columns, but shows in Copenhagen have a very clear format: three to four bands, first band at 10 pm, show over around 1 am. So, when you're in the *real adulthood* phase with the *real job* that follows, you either lose sleep or miss the show. For me, working nights and weekends makes me miss even more shows. This is the feud between the *real adult* and the punk. You have to focus your life on either your job or punk. One brings food on the table, the other one doesn't. But the hamster wheel of going to work and coming home mentally exhausted will slowly kill your passion. Yes, the key to this is having a job that you actually enjoy doing (which is a huge privilege, I know), but having a job is still a limitation to your personal freedom. Maybe these choices in your life are anti-punk because isn't punk supposed to be promoting freedom and anti-authoritarianism? No matter what, saying you're skipping a show because you get a proper rest before work just doesn't sound very punk.

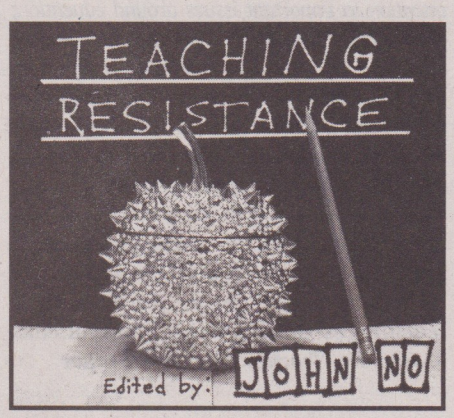
Of course there are jobs within the punk scene (well, not in Copenhagen), which come with a side of others claiming that someone isn't punk because they make money off punk. So even punk jobs aren't punk, I guess. Let me make it clear, I'm all about volunteering and the not-for-profit idealism, but if you work full-time hours in punk-related businesses, it's fair that you should be able to pay your rent without having to get a second job.

I can't not compare the youth-fixated Copenhagen scene with my experiences as a visitor in the Japanese punk scene—I'd be a baby punk in Japan, I'm amazed that so many older punks stay in the scene in Japan, even though they have full time office jobs, kids, and so on. And I experienced how friends had to alter their looks to go to work, like wearing a wig to cover bleached hair, wearing a mask to cover piercings or wearing a suit though they didn't feel comfortable in one and would never choose to wear one. I can't imagine any of the Copenhagen punks I know wearing a suit for a job. These differences are most likely caused by the big differences in Danish and Japanese society in general. In Denmark, you can live a youthful lifestyle for quite a long

time and it's widely accepted to do so, while in Japan it seems you have to get a *real job* to survive. Thereby, living a more adult lifestyle is not a choice but mandatory, and as any punk scene is a reflection of mainstream society, this makes it easier to stay in punk after you enter the *real adult* phase, in my opinion.

I'm lucky enough to have a *real job* that's quite flexible, with a boss that thinks me taking time off to run a festival packed with 1000 punks will give me skills that improve my actual work in live entertainment. Yet there's no way that I'll spend my time off on punk volunteer work. There's a lot of hamster wheel volunteer work in punk here. Cleaning the venue, cooking for the soup kitchen, serving drinks, etc. All of those things are real work. With very little pay-off. The pay-off doesn't necessarily have to be money, there are definitely hundreds of non-material things that mean more to me than money. Right now, this kind of volunteer work doesn't bring me satisfaction or acknowledgment so I've skipped it because I simply don't want to do it as it's nothing more than a punk hamster wheel to me. And, if there's one thing I've learned through aging, it's that I shouldn't do something out of a sense of obligation because my health is more important. It's a dog-eat-dog world and even in punk you have to be somewhat an individualistic to survive. So I've limited my punk life in a way that maybe even isolates me. Punk is a community and, due to flock mentality and our basic need to belong and associate ourselves with a community, isolation is a punk killer. If your only interaction with punk is to listen to records in your living room, in a sense you won't be punk even if you have a punk state of mind, because you won't be perceived as punk due to not interacting socially or publicly with punk.

I've come to the conclusion that you must either completely kill the punk phase or figure out how to balance the *real adult punk* phase. Combining the two conflicting phases into one might seem like the easy way out. But this phase is not the punk phase because so many things have changed for me that make me reject punk in a way, and it's not the *real adult* phase, where you're expected to buy a home, have 1.8 kids and a golden retriever and take part in the work-eat-sleep cycle hamster wheel until retirement. The *real adult punk* is an evolution of the punk phase, that is created when adolescence grows into adulthood. And this phase has many contradictions within itself, as a more adult lifestyle goes against the anti-establishment values of punk. The phase is full of conflicts but that's the way it is. Just like I've accepted and am comfortable with growing older, I'm starting to feel comfortable with this new phase. It'll take some time getting used to it, it is a new life after all. High school biology taught me that living organisms will and must grow, age and evolve. Even Copenhagen punk appears to be growing these days, as the *adult punk* evolves, and more shows come with a "over by 11:30 so you can catch your beauty sleep" promise. I guess punk is alive and evolving after all.



"Special Education" is an umbrella term used in United States public schools to refer to programs and services that support students who fall under a range of categories outside what the state and administration consider the "Mainstream" of the student population. In practice, this primarily means severely physically and / or mentally disabled students, those with diagnosed learning disabilities such as ADHD and Autism-spectrum conditions, and non-neurotypical students who cope with severe behavioral and emotional disorders—with the latter category of students coming disproportionately from backgrounds of poverty and systemic, often racial, oppression.

As anyone who grew up attending these schools knows, "Special Ed" has been used as a bigoted, "jokey", insult between students not in these programs, as well as a slur that can be directed towards students who fall under their official classification. Part of this is due to the near-total separation that "Mainstream" and "Special Education" students used to have in typical public school settings, including physically separate classrooms and counseling facilities. In very recent years, one thing that has improved this situation and helped students to see each other as equal human beings has been the implementation of fairly radical new policies of integrating special education students into the broader school population. These policies are sometimes referred to as "Mainstreaming"—an assimilationist term radical teachers tend to not care for much at all—or "Special Education Inclusion", which is much closer to the truth and recognizant of the importance and existence of diversity within the "Mainstream" student body.

This month's Teaching Resistance is by Stephen, a Special Education teacher who is deeply invested in the radical, proud inclusion of his students into the greater student body.

It feels a bit crazy to write anything positive about the public education system these days. I imagine that it comes as no surprise to *MRR* readers that the current administration's agenda is having immediate and widespread implications for public school systems, their teachers, and their students. With Betsy DeVos the Terrible at the helm, the little support of public education that existed before this regime emerged is sinking and doing so rapidly. Underfunded schools are hanging on despite a system that is actively rigged against their functionality. And yet, all of this considered, I would like to point towards a small glimmer of progress in the corner of this rubble. I believe that "special education inclusion" is one of the only emerging practices in public education that may save this otherwise doomed system.

I am a special education teacher at a public high school in a large urban school district in California. I have been supporting people with disabilities for the last ten years, and have been formally teaching in this school district for five years. I do not identify as having a disability. This is salient because I don't want to position myself as a spokesperson for the differently-abled. I currently support ten students ages fourteen to eighteen in an "inclusion program." What this means is that I spend all of my work hours (and the occasional Sunday) trying to facilitate the inclusion of these students into the general education school environment. This is a unique program and I believe that inclusion programs, though admittedly flawed and developing, represent an important and powerful paradigm shift in attitudes towards people with disabilities.

People with disabilities have been excluded from the education system in this country since its formation. Up until very recently, if you experienced a disability you were thought of as not relevant to the offerings of public education. Before 50 years ago, millions of children were denied access to public schools because of their disabilities. Things slowly started to change: the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (1973) and the passage of ADA (1990) started to formalize the support for disabled students, but these had limited implications in terms of inclusion. In 1997, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act was passed and mandated the inclusion of disabled students in public school, but much work still remained to be done as to what this would look like.

Until quite recently, kids impacted by "moderate to severe disabilities" were allowed to enroll in public schools, but they were placed in self-contained classrooms. I am sure most neurotypical and physically-

typical people that went to public schools in this country were aware of this. You might see kids with disabilities at lunch or in your P.E. classes, but they were likely not in your english class or your biology class. In most cases their marginalization was manifested not just socially but physically. Most special education classrooms are pushed into a literal corner of a school campus.

This trend is changing, and without ample space to explain and consider all of the reasons why this is the case, it does represent a sort of social / philosophical progress in an otherwise grim system. School districts across the country are implementing inclusive practices for people with disabilities. Typical kids are sitting next to, talking to, and getting to know kids that up until very recently were cast out of public schools or grouped together by falsely perceived "ability" levels in separate classrooms.

It seems obvious to me that a public education system ought to provide equitable access to classrooms, teachers, and curriculum, regardless of a pupil's perceived abilities. Of course, it is not only the students with disabilities that benefit from this exchange. If you go to your math class and sit next to a student with cerebral palsy that has limited motor function, no verbal speech, and uses a tablet to communicate, I've got to imagine that you are more likely to grow up respecting the humanity and defending the rights of people that present like this person. Maybe you will start to understand that "typical" is an operative social construct. Maybe you will see that your preconceived ideas about intelligence are ableist. Maybe you will see that we have been filtered into made-up categories that do nothing but preserve the status quo. This is where I think the revolutionary seed exists. I feel fortunate to have watched many typical students come to this realization due to the inclusion of students with disabilities in their classes.

I would be lying if I suggested that the introduction of inclusion programs has somehow fixed all of the inequities that are upheld and promoted by the public education system. There is a disproportionate amount of middle / upper class white students in inclusion programs. Often times, the only way to argue for your child's inclusion in the general education schedule is through hiring an attorney. The mere act of "hiring an attorney" is a privilege afforded to very few families. In addition to this, there are limited resources to make inclusive practices successful. The school districts have impossibly tight budgets, the turn-over rate of special education teachers is laughably high, etc., etc. Yet, despite all of this, the integration of inclusion programs as a way of supporting students with disabilities does promote the possibility of a better future. And in times like this, it feels like any way that the paradigm shifts from "bad" to "better" is a small triumph worth celebrating.

—Stephen, Special Education Teacher

The Teaching Resistance column is designed to provide a platform for radical, subversive teachers/educators to share their ideas and draw attention to important issues around education; particularly compulsory- and community-based education. If you are a teacher (anywhere in the world) for students of primary or secondary school ages (K-12), Community Colleges, or alternative learning arrangements such as collectivist free schools, and you want to submit an idea for a column, please write an email to teachingresistance@gmail.com. There is also an archive for this column which can be found online at teachingresistancearchive.blogspot.com.
—John No, Teaching Resistance editor

PERFECT PUNK MOMENTS

In the July 2012 issue (#350), I wrote a column called *Shots Across The Bow*, where I listed my favorite riffs and intros that start an album, EP or single. Those included the guitar riff that opens BLACK FLAG's "Nervous Breakdown," the guitar roar introducing STIFF LITTLE FINGERS' "Suspect Device" and the build up and explosion for VOID's "Who Are You?" A related topic that I've discussed / enlightened / bored people with over the years is so-called perfect musical moments. Not necessarily a hook or melody line but something in a song that makes you stop whatever you're doing and just revel in that moment. Maybe even start a circle pit or play air guitar. I'm talking about something transcendent or jolting.

Timmy Yo's favorite F.U.'s album *My America* (and no, for the millionth time, they're *not* Nazis) has two such moments. During the opening song "What You Pay For," after the second chorus of *"Giving...NOTHING! / Asking NOTHING! / Promising NOTHING! / Delivering NOTHING!,"* they kick into a swirling sonic storm that makes me want to start wrecking things. Same for "Boston's Finest," which leads from a double-speed onslaught into one fucking hell of a circle pit part. Same for the CRO-MAGS' "World Peace," going from thrash into one of the best breakdowns ever. When I saw the band VIPER do a cover of this song some years back, the guitarist dropped his instrument during that break and got in the pit.

Guitar solos are usually forgettable or mundane but there are a few that deserve mention. The ten second sputtering skronk in the middle of the DEADBEATS' "Kill The Hippies" would have Jerry Garcia rolling over in his grave. His eternally-stoned fans might like it though. EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING's "Anxiety" (off of their *Rush To Relax* album) has a, care of Mikey Young, surging, sublime, climaxing the repetitive, solo bridge that starts about two minutes in. "And That's Sad," off NOMEANSNO's *The Day Everything Became Nothing*, is a big wind-up over the course of its nearly seven minutes, gradually building up momentum until it erupts about five minutes and twenty seconds in. John and Rob Wright harmonize *"saaaaaad... saaaaaad..."* before a mind-bending guitar solo, then more *"saaaaaad"* and it comes to an abrupt conclusion. Tension and release.

How about more jarring conclusions to songs? Speaking of tension and release, there's SLINT's "Good Morning Captain," off their *Spiderland* album. In fact, it's tension and release for the entire album until the payoff comes in that final moment. Actually, it's more a case of ebb and flow, as they float through quiet passages, with sporadic bursts of fuzzy guitar. This leads into vocalist Brian McMahan's anguished *"I MISS YOU!!,"* as the band just erupts underneath him, and then it fades out with a twenty second afterglow. The playing throughout this song effortlessly shifts moods, driven by Britt Walford's stellar drumming. Rumor has it that, after they finished the song, Brian left the recording booth and then proceeded to puke his guts up. That was mentioned in *Breadcrumb Trail*, which is a pretty good documentary about the band.

You can also hear Eugene Reynolds puke during their song "Bad Guy Reaction, from *Can't Stand The Rezillos*, right before the guitar break. It's the end that's spine-tingling, though. Eugene's vocals become increasingly manic and unhinged-sounding and then they stop and he goes *"don't ever try to put me down!"* in the most menacing voice possible. Everything stops for six or seven seconds, and then they finish the song while you're still recovering.

UNDERDOG's "Say It To My Face" also ends with a formidable threat. This is one of the toughest sounding songs ever. OK, that's a bit hyperbolic, but this song struts with pure malevolence. At the end, there's an instrumental segment riding a pounding groove, it stops and then Richie Birkenhead

goes *"step back!"* I always stop, do a bit of a karate move and put my hand in front of me like a cop giving a stop sign. When I've done that on my walks by the beach while listening to this song, I've gotten more than a few puzzled looks.

QUEEN's "Sheer Heart Attack" (the song, not the album) came out in '77 and you figure it might have been their answer to punk, although the song actually dates to earlier in their career. Their fastest, most relentless, exhibition of scorch, masterminded by drummer Roger Taylor, who played all the instruments except for lead guitar. After a brief drum break at the end, the onslaught continues and you expect a gigantic musical pileup but they just pull the plug on the song—kind of like the end of *The Sopranos*. Only this song is a lot better than JOURNEY's "Don't Stop Believing," which was playing when the scene abruptly cut off. Trust me on that one.

BLACK FLAG's "Life Of Pain," from *Damaged*, ends with the same creepy crawl arrangement that the song starts with, as Rollins laments *"you're digging your own grave...and you're taking my feelings with you,"* then it speeds up and he goes *"there's got to be a way to get out!"* and it cuts out right then, leading into "Damaged I." GUN CLUB's "For The Love Of Ivy", off *Fire of Love*, is a ride through the backwoods of hell, with Jeffrey Lee Pierce's vocal lines answered with sharp, bluesy, blasts. Things get mighty quiet towards the end, Jeffrey Lee whispering *"come to me Ivy."* Then, all of a sudden, he come back and yells *"I was all dressed up like an elvis from hell...hell!!!"* Time to flip the record over. The assumption is that the Ivy alluded to was Poison Ivy from the CRAMPS but rumor also has it the song is about shooting heroin (I.V.—get it?). The perfect accompaniment for late night drives on lonely rural roads. Just keep your eyes open.

I'm still trying to figure out how Choke from NEGATIVE FX let out a hellacious yell for six seconds at the end of "VFW." Or how Jerry A did it for just as long on "Discontent." Studio trickery? I'll try not to let my suspiciousness get the best of me. Both are blood-curdling. As are Ian MacKaye's emanations during "In My Eyes"—I'm thinking of *"do you fucking get it?"* and *"what the fuck have you done?"* with each leading into the song's chorus. It's still one of the most exciting moments in the history of hardcore. I've told this story before but when Ellen was living next door to some noisy neighbors in one of her Boston apartments and they were playing horrible music, I put her stereo speaker in the window and let it rip! Ellen's not a big hardcore fan but I'm pretty sure she approved of my actions since the neighbors were definitely getting on our nerves.

Finally, DILLINGER FOUR's "The Great American Going Out Of Business Sale" ends *Midwestern Songs of the Americas*, with a heartfelt tirade about the state of the world voiced over surging, driving, melodic punk. Singing the lyrics often brings tears to my eyes. Not enough space to post them all but I raise my fist in solidarity as Paddy sings *"'cause I've had enough of all this shit of making do and playing ball, the ways things are and dealing with it"* and concluding with *"I'll die the day I find I'm fucking useless!,"* before leading into "Taps," taken from a scratchy Girl Scout sing-along record that my mother had. My epitaph? Maybe, although I'm actually thinking of being cremated and having my ashes scattered over the beach by the walkway where I've sung along with that song while it's playing on my iPod. I do know that when the day comes to do the final Sonic Overload, that'll be the last song ever played.

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At the end of the summer, when the MACHO BOYS came through town, their bass-player Samantha put me on the spot a bit. We were chatting right before their set and she wanted my opinion on why zines are still relevant in the internet era. I told her I needed to think about it. During their set, while the guitarist was fixing a string, she took the mic and asked me again. I said my answer used to be that you could read a zine sitting on the toilet but it'd be tough to balance a laptop. Of course, this was before smartphones and tablets were widespread. So, I asked for a show of hands—how many of you read your phones while on the throne—and, of course, it was almost unanimous. Another theory shot to hell. Once again, I dodged the question. Samantha asked me one last time on Instagram (I think)—"you never answered my question." I finally said that zines were an artifact that captured a moment in time, something that was permanent, that couldn't be altered like you can with an online blog or column. That was the inherent value—history unfolding in real time. I guess that's a good answer. Also, some people do like to have a tangible artifact—a zine, a book, a record or tape.

The print zine isn't completely a thing of the past—I mean, what are you reading now? And people still make the effort to put out something tangible. I haven't completely given up the ghost. I did 45 issues of *Suburban Voice/Suburban Punk* from 1982 to 2003. I still want to do at least one more but, as I always say, who knows? Yes, I spend way too much time on the machine and that's where I do get most of my musical information these days but I still enjoy getting in the recliner, putting on a record and reading a book or zine instead of staring at the screen.

One thing that's becoming increasingly commonplace are anthologies of old zines (*Touch and Go*, *We Got Power* or *Schism*, for instance), punk memoirs, oral histories and the like. I suppose you could say the market's getting a little saturated, although there are some quality tomes out there.

One recent collection is the *xXx Fanzine (1983-1988) Hardcore & Punk in the Eighties* book by Mike Gitter. (In the interest of full disclosure, I wrote one of the forewords). It's a hardcover, 11" x 11", 288 glossy page compendium of original content from the 20 issues he published from 1983 to 1988 and augmented with updated interviews of people interviewed "back in the day," as well reminiscences by Gitter and other individuals who were involved, along with additional photos and flyers. Those items surround the original zine layout. In addition to the interviews, the vintage content includes scene updates, show, zine and live reviews. It's a history exhibition unfolding in real time.

Gitter started his zine in the spring of '83, some months after the first issue of mine. As with most embryonic zines, the layout was a primitive cut and paste format and the quality improved as time progressed—half-toning the photos, using offset printers instead of going to the copy shop etc. *xXx* never got away from its fanzine look, though. He never went to a full-color glossy format.

The writing and depth of interviews also improved as time progressed, as did the scope of bands that Gitter interviewed. At the beginning, he wrote about and interviewed mainly hardcore and punk bands and spoke with just all of the "legends"—MINOR THREAT, BLACK FLAG, NECROS, NEGATIVE APPROACH, 7 SECONDS, VOID, BATTALION OF SAINTS, as well as all the classic local hardcore bands and even some that didn't always get a lot of ink, like PSYCHO. He didn't just stick to one style of hardcore or punk either—it ran the gamut from UK bands to west coast punk to straight edge purveyors. He eventually moved a bit beyond strictly punk and hardcore to include acts like LYDIA LUNCH and SWANS and expanded into the metal realm with the likes of METALLICA (around the time that *Ride the Lightning* came out), EXODUS, VOIVOD, and MOTÖRHEAD, along with second and third generation bands like DAG NASTY, KINGFACE, IGNITION, and ALL. It's a documentation of Gitter's musical journey, as things went in different directions. One thing Gitter didn't do was editorialize about political issues. It was always about the music for him.

The then-and-now aspect of the book is a different wrinkle and it's fun to see people giving their current day perspective on what happened then, now that they're older

and wiser (maybe the latter is sometimes questionable).You have Vic Bondi from ARTICLES OF FAITH revealing that the band had already broken up when he did the interview but it wasn't public knowledge yet and the members of VOID talking about their unreleased *Potion For Bad Dreams* album. All in all, it's an enjoyable trip down memory lane, while also tying things to the present day. (Bridge Nine, www.bridge9.com)

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It's the end of another year, when everyone is preoccupied with revisiting the past twelve months in order to cull obligatory and endless "best of" lists, and meanwhile, my column in these last days of 2017 just unpurposely winds up with much of the same focus as every other one that I've written this year (that would be digging even further back into things that originally appeared two or three or four decades ago). This has been a total garbage year anyway, y'know?

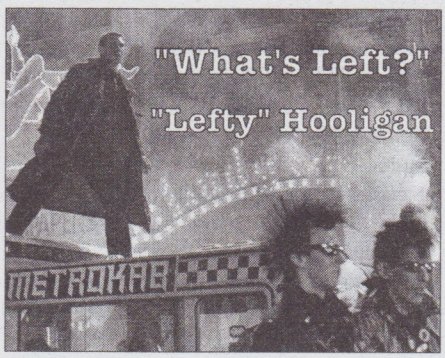
KICKING GIANT formed at art school in New York City in 1989 when, according to legend, guitarist Tae Won Yu ran into soon-to-be-drummer Rachel Carns wearing an EINSTÜRZENDE NEUBAUTEN shirt and asked her to his counterpart in minimalist punk duo. She'd never played drums before, but quickly put together a Moe Tucker-style stand-up kit and the two began writing several cassettes worth of stripped-down songs that balanced a fiery punk snarl with a vulnerable pop heart. By the early '90s, they'd fallen in with the tightly-knit axis of riot grrrl and Kill Rock Stars / K Records-affiliated bands, which instigated KICKING GIANT's move to Olympia in 1992 after playing the International Pop Underground convention. Their one and only full-length, the gloriously scrappy *Alien I.D.*, appeared on K (naturally) in 1994, and the band fractured not long after. Fast forward to 2017, and a brand new double-LP reissue called *This Being the Ballad of Kicking Giant, Halo: NYC / Olympia 1989-1993* collects nearly all of the 22 tracks from the duo's 1993 *Halo* CD / cassette anthology of their early DIY tape material, and also marks the first time that most of those songs have ever appeared on vinyl. Although KICKING GIANT were all-too-often lumped in with the naive indie pop faction centered around bands like BEAT HAPPENING by virtue of their shared skeletal and defiantly amateurish musical approach (and the whole Olympia/K connection, obviously), they completely sidestepped that scene's tendencies toward "slumber parties and ice cream cones" childlike whimsy—while BEAT HAPPENING lamented *"I've got a crush on you / what am I to do?,"* KICKING GIANT responded with wildly-charged shouts of *"fuck the rules / and make me yours tonight."* Apparently *Halo* was originally intended to be a mixtape of sorts and, almost 25 years later, it functions just as much as crash course in the DIY underground of the pre-internet '90s, touching on everything from sparsely strummed lo-fi bedroom recordings on the fragile "Rocket", to the ecstatically jumpy indie rock of "Satellite" that wouldn't have been out of place on an early SUPERCHUNK record, to the dark and almost Dischord-y angular punk of "Love Science". KICKING GIANT's legacy might be preserved here via the relative slickness of 180-gram vinyl in a glossy, full-color tip-on gatefold sleeve (and deservedly so), but their spirit is always going to be one of hand-dubbed thrift store cassettes and cut-and-paste photocopied fanzines. (Drawing Room, drawingroomrecords.bandcamp.com)

I'm sure that Melbourne, Australia's NO SISTER are tired of the constant comparisons to pre-major label SONIC YOUTH that they seem to invite, and while I'm certainly not going to argue that those parallels don't hold any weight, the monochrome post-punk clang of group's second LP *The Second Floor* can honestly be traced back even further to some of SONIC YOUTH's own initial source material. There's threads of the violently gnarled guitar squall of GLENN BRANCA, the kinetic, droning rhythms of CAN, THIS HEAT's multi-layered discordant soundscapes, and yeah, some undeniable *Evol* / *Sister* damage, particularly in the flatly-affected dual vocals and ringing, razor-edged guitar interplay from Mino Peric and Tiarney Miekus—catch that super-bent "(I Got A) Catholic Block"-style riff in "Vow of Chastity", which spends over half of its six minutes building up into a tense, knotted instrumental sprawl before its caustically intoned lyrics cut in. "You Know the Feeling?" combines tumbling stop / start rhythms and choppy slashes of guitar with an agitated EX-like urgency, and "Satellite Power" and "Always Already" both push the brittle, foreboding post-punk / no wave synthesis of mid '80s bands like UT into a far more bruising direction. Perfectly fraught and foreboding sounds for our current bleak reality. (nosister.bandcamp.com)

Speaking of Australian post-punk, pivotal late '70s Sydney weirdos VOIGT/465 got the reissue treatment this year with the LP *Slights Still Unspoken: Selected Recordings 1978-1979*, which pairs the group's lone album (*Slights Unspoken*) with their debut single from a year prior and two previously unreleased songs, plus a handful of live tracks included as a bonus digital download. The band formed in 1976, drawing from a similar set of influences as any number of art-minded first wave punks from Cleveland to Manchester (the VELVET UNDERGROUND, the STOOGES, CAPTAIN BEEFHEART, glam rock, Krautrock, '60s garage and psychedelia, etc.), and by the time the first VOIGT/465 record was brought into the world in 1978, they had fully embraced post-punk's approach to outside-the-box experimentation as a rejection of year zero punk traditionalism. *Slights Still Unspoken* starts off with the single's A-side, "State," an absolute DIY art-punk stunner of whirring synth, stuttering drums, and throbbing bass, all weaving through an insistent, off-kilter melody and overlapping male/female vocals from Phil Turnbull and Rae Macron Cru that suggest an Australian SUBURBAN LAWNS (a full year before SUBURBAN LAWNS put out their own first single!). If that was VOIGT/465's initial stab at loopy post-punk on the cusp of new wave, then the moody and glacial electronic textures of the B-side "A Secret West" could have been copped directly from one of the first three BRIAN ENO solo albums—it's probably also worth mentioning that one of the live recordings included with this LP is a cover of ENO-era ROXY MUSIC's "Remake/Remodel." The *Slights Unspoken* LP was recorded shortly before the group split up in 1979, and it finds their freewheeling approach fracturing into even more disparate angles. On Macron Cru-fronted tracks like "Voices A Drama" and "Imprint," VOIGT/465 take the spiky femme-punk freneticism of their UK contemporaries ESSENTIAL LOGIC and swap out the sax for synths, while the Turnbull-sung "Red Lock on Sea Steal" has a very SWELL MAPS-ish scrape and clatter, and the mechanically-rhythmed "P" takes the simple three-word line of *"I see you"* and twists it into seemingly every possible phrasing to fuck with patterns and repetition in the spirit of CAN (whose own "Connection" gets turned into a frantic punk whiplash in the bonus live set). Just imagine what strange and wonderful things they might have come up with if they'd managed to make it into the '80s! Absolutely vital artifact of the Australian post-punk underground. (Mental

Experience, guerssenrecords.bandcamp.com)

Say hey at ripitupstartagain@gmail.com, more sights and sounds at futuresandpasts.org.



"Today on the Galloping Gourmet we will be preparing smoke bomb flambeau."

Scott stood over the grimy stove in the shotgun shack off Ventura Avenue holding a beer in one hand and a saucepan in the other. He had that rakish, Graham Kerr attitude down, although his hippy hair and attire belied his bon vivant pose. Tom and I stood over a tiny formica table piled with a large sack of granulated sugar, an equally large smoked glass bottle of sodium nitrate, several boxes of "strike anywhere" matches, more pots, pans, and bowls, and a copy of Abbey Hoffman's *Steal This Book* open to the section on "People's Chemistry." Scott directed our work with a wave of the pan and a swig of beer.

"First, thoroughly mix together six parts saltpeter, otherwise known as potassium nitrate, with four parts sugar. Sodium nitrate may be used in a pinch. Then pour the mixture into a medium pan and place it over a very low flame. Heat it slowly and carefully until it starts to melt and blend into a plastic like substance."

Scott was gay, although that word wasn't in common use in January, 1971. He'd walked around one of Jake and Connie's raging parties wearing a colorful paisley cravat. When people commented "nice ascot" to him, he'd smile, wink, swivel his hips, and reply "why, thank you." Scott had been the one to suggest lining the pan with aluminum foil so the concoction could be removed intact. And as the materials for our smoke bomb liquified and turned brown under my attention, Scott said over my shoulder: "Subtle, a little bittersweet, not blowsy and extrovert. Perfect."

Tom had been breaking the tops off wooden matches which we intended to embed into the substance once it gelled but was still pliable. That way our smoke bomb wouldn't require a fuse but could be set off simply by striking it against some hard surface. We intended to detonate the device inside a public meeting of the Ventura City Council as they feinted discussing whether to ratify the People's Peace Treaty. Negotiated between the North Vietnamese and representatives of the American peace movement, the People's Peace Treaty didn't have a snowball's chance in hell of being ratified, let alone acted upon by either the city of Ventura or the United States government. It was a propaganda instrument and a device for mobilizing anti-war support. Our smoke bomb was intended to protest the farce of disingenuously discussing peace while bombing the hell out of the Vietnamese people. However, as Tom and I wedged match heads into the hardening mass, our efforts were a little too close set. One match scraped another, a spark flew, and the whole thing ignited. Scott grabbed the exploding pan, ran into the backyard, and held the fireworks at arms length as a mushroom smoke cloud roared skyward.

We were greatly impressed by the volume of smoke from our inadvertent test run, and we had enough ingredients left to whip up another batch. But we never got a chance to use our second bomb because the city council meeting was guarded by police who frisked everyone as they entered. Our plans had been leaked, perhaps because we'd done our planning out in the open, in the office of the local Unitarian Church with the minister typing out the church newsletter in the same room. When a member of the congregation entered, heard what we were talking about, and asked the minister what the hell we were planning, the minister said, without looking up from his typing: "I hear nothing, I see nothing, I know nothing!"

I've told this story a couple of times before in this column. But unlike a former columnist who was fired in part because he kept repeating his columns almost verbatim, I've taken pains to make this retelling original, lively, and interesting. I'm trying to make two points with it, the first being the difference between truth and fact. This story is entirely true but only partially factual, and to illustrate that issue, consider the story of Charles Drew. A black American physician and surgeon before the second World War who isolated plasma from blood, he was involved in a fatal automobile accident in North Carolina in 1950. The myth is that Drew died as a result of having been refused a blood transfusion due to the color of his skin when, in fact, the accident was so severe he didn't survive. The myth about Drew's death was not factual, but it was true with respect to race relations in the South during that time.

My story above was not factual in that Scott was not in my original telling. I substituted him because I recently learned that the person upon whom the character Scott is based died. The story however is true, and so the problematic relationship between truth and fact remains. Despite the common meaning of a fact as logic itself, we never have a fact, only evidence for a fact, and that evidence implies a truth. And truth is never self-evident, but can lead via suggestion and inspiration to the facts. Yet facts, like data or statistics, can lie much as the truth, as myth or story, can lie. So, it's complicated, much more so in this post-truth era.

Second, my story is meant to illustrate the relationship between protest, violence, and terrorism. One of my favorite quotes is from pacifist Marianne Williamson who said: "Birth is violent, whether it be the birth of a child or the birth of an idea." I'm tempted to say that all life involves violence, beginning with one form of life devouring another form of life in order to survive. Non-violent crime is a misnomer because it usually involves some form of "property crime" resulting in damage to another person's property, often in addition to emotional harm to the family and loved ones of the non-violent criminal. And the practice of nonviolence, from Gandhi to Martin Luther King, has invariably resulted in extreme violence by the powers-that-be and sometimes the general public against those same non-violent protesters.

We certainly believed in the '60s that while harming living beings was violence, property destruction was not. Yet back when we were planning to smoke bomb our city council as a form of protest we realized that we were engaged in a certain low level of violence, and that violent protest wasn't necessarily a bad thing. The first smoke bomb went off with a huge chemical discharge of heat and flame, so our tiny group was rightly concerned that anyone sitting near the device when we set it off might be injured, even as we thought nothing of the panic our bomb might cause in the meeting attendees. Many in the Ventura police and city council would have considered what we wanted to do not just violence, but terrorism. The tendency to treat all protest, not just violent protest, as a form of terrorism has only grown since. From the Right's misplaced efforts to have Antifa—which is an *organizing strategy* against fascism—declared a domestic terrorist *organization*, to the government's heavy handed efforts to prosecute the J20 anti-inauguration protesters with multiple felonies involving decades in prison if convicted speaks to the rightwing effort to see all forms of protest and violence, especially on the Left, as political terrorism.

Political terrorism, whether domestic or international, is the use of violence to achieve certain political results, whether frightening a population or cowing a leadership into doing the terrorists' bidding, softening up the terrorized for a takeover. Terrorism is never terror for terror's sake. Despite not considering our protest overtly violent, let alone terrorist, we were trying to make a

political point, no matter how misguided. And politics has everything to do with how protest, violence, and terrorism are defined as well as acted upon. I wrote last column that the "right" to free speech is a fight for power, pure and simple. So is what is considered protest, violence, and terrorism, and how we deal with them. Right now the government and the Right are trying to criminalize most protest and call it domestic terrorism. We need to make our protests against the government and the Right as widespread and creative as possible.

And we're itching for that fight.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA

Personal blog: gamatiasz.wordpress.com
Political blog: leftyhooligan.wordpress.com
Aggregator website: gamatiasz.com
Publishing website: 62milepress.com
Facebook profile: facebook.com/georgematiasz
Facebook writer page: facebook.com/gamatiasz
Personal Instagram: instagram.com/gamatiasz
Book Instagram: instagram.com/onepercentfree

Undetectable, Part 1

December 1st marked the 29th annual World AIDS day. This year's theme was "Increasing Impact through Transparency, Accountability, and Partnerships." The World Health Organization's slogan for this year was "everybody counts." I'd like to explore this lofty, coded, goal and find out who we are supposed to be holding accountable for its failure. Funding for HIV prevention and care programs, once a bottomless well of government resources, has all but dried up in recent years. As for the remaining dollars: are they being concentrated in communities which are most affected? Why are transmission rates so much higher in certain populations? Why do 23% of Americans diagnosed with HIV fail to follow through with treatment, and what does this mean in light of the treatment as prevention model? What are the barriers here and elsewhere in the world? This mini-series of an investigation will get to the bottom of these hard-hitting questions, and much much more! This month's column is going to be a quick primer on the current state of HIV treatment.

These days, HIV is considered to be a chronic, manageable, condition in developed countries. There is still no cure for HIV, but a positive diagnosis is no longer considered the death sentence it once was. In many developed countries, people living with HIV are likely to live just as long as those without the virus.

In recognition of Gay Men's HIV / AIDS Awareness day in September, The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) released a statement that says if you are living with HIV and your viral load is undetectable, you have *zero* chance of transmitting the virus to anyone else through sexual contact. This is something that the medical community has known for a few years, but getting the green light from the CDC, the foremost authority on health matters in the US if not the world, really seals the deal. This is huge. It means that if you are adherent to your HIV meds, it's literally impossible to transmit the virus sexually. However, so far, this does not apply to HIV transmission through needle sharing. There hasn't been significant research to say either way if treatment for prevention will be successful in keeping the HIV virus at bay with people who inject drugs. Either way, HIV incidence is suddenly on a major upward trajectory for people who inject drugs after remaining relatively low in many parts of the Americas for over a decade. Expect to hear more about this in coming issues.

Historically, CD4 count (aka T cell count) has been the primary indicator you hear about in regards to the progression of HIV in the body. The World Health Organization advises anti-retroviral treatment when CD4 is 350 or under. In the US and other developed countries, treatment is often initiated well above this marker. An AIDS diagnosis is given once your CD4 count reaches 200. For reasons that are too complicated to get in to in this column, once you have received an AIDS diagnosis it stays with you until you die. Even if a person's CD4 count climbs back up above 200, they would still be considered to have AIDS.

But CD4 count is really just a measure of immune system functioning. The viral load is the number of HIV particles (aka copies) per mL of blood. Both stats are very important when considering the course and timing of treatment, but the viral load can act as a proxy for the risk of transmitting the virus to others. A higher viral load translates to greater risk of infecting others. Unfortunately, a person's viral load is highest in the first six months after acquiring the infection. Most people won't even know they are carrying the virus in the time they are most likely to give it to someone else.

The technical definition of viral suppression is having under 200 copies of the HIV virus per mL of blood, and undetectable is defined as anything under 40 copies per mL of blood. As far as transmission risks go, these terms are interchangeable. A person's viral load will generally decrease after the acute phase of the infection even without treatment, but it's incredibly unlikely that a person will become undetectable without anti-retroviral treatment. There is a very small percentage of people whose viral load won't increase above 50 copies without treatment. These chosen people are given the cringeworthy title of 'elite controllers'.

The rate of new HIV infections in the US decreased 10% between 2011-2014, and another 5% after that. But that success rate continues to level off and we have come to a plateau. There are still 2 million new infections a year around the world, and 30% of HIV-infected people who are living with the virus don't know it. According to UNAIDS, there has been a 16% drop in new HIV infections around the world since 2010. Although Southern and Eastern Africa have reduced rates of infection by a whopping 29%, this region still sees more new infections by leaps and bounds over any other corner of the world. Additionally, the HIV incidence rate in Eastern Europe and Central Asia increased by *sixty percent* in the same period.

Back in the US, HIV incidence among the general population may be leveling out, but new infections may be on the rise for certain key populations. One in six men who have sex with men (MSM) will be infected in their lifetime. The population with the highest incidence of new infections is black MSM, by a considerable number. Latino MSM have the second highest rate of new infections. According to the CDC, black Americans are at much greater risk of contracting HIV than any other racial group. About 1 out of every 20 black men will get infected with the virus at some point. For white men it's more like 1 in 132. 1 out of 48 black women will contract HIV in her lifetime, compared with 1 in 880 for white women. Clearly, there are significant and revealing differences across different demographics when it comes to HIV. We're going to be revisiting this in more depth later.

The Treatment Cascade, also called the Continuum of Care, is a model used to illustrate the steps between HIV diagnosis and viral suppression. It can be used to highlight barriers to adherence that people face when accessing services. According to the CDC, the current US cascade looks like this: 85% of Americans who are HIV positive *know* that they are HIV positive. The other 15% have yet to be diagnosed. 62% have received clinical care for their HIV. 48% were retained in care (had two lab tests done

at least three months apart in one year), and 49% are virally suppressed. While this 49% represents huge improvements relative to five years earlier, it still means only about half of HIV+ Americans are virally suppressed; 42% of people who know they have the virus are not virally suppressed, and 23% of people who have received a diagnosis drop off before receiving care or getting meds.

Half of HIV+ Americans reaching undetectable status in the US is significant, but if the goal is to get to zero new HIV infections, half isn't gonna cut it. So if treatment can help you live as long as anyone else, and prevent you from transmitting the virus, why aren't more people going to the doctor, getting their labs done, taking their meds, and getting virally suppressed? Why are people falling out of care? And why is HIV on the rise in some subpopulations but declining in others? Stay tuned...

They Threw Me in the Van
And they took My Knife

Listen up you pencil-necks! We took a month off but we're back! I don't even want to think about what this magazine looks like without our presence (A mix between *Mother Jones* and *Viceland*!) I didn't read it cuz I wasn't in it but I'm sure it was lacking any coverage of the chosen few (Skinhead!) And to the snow babies out there, if last month's Turbo-free mag was a rejuvenating hit off the ol' can of duster I'm sure this issue still has a grip of menses-themed bands and an in-depth history of "punk-horticulture" (aka how to not kill your raggedy-ass jade plant) for you to get jazzed on. And of course everyone's favorite grampa, Comrade Hooligan, will be doing his best alt-left Ben Stein act (No Dad, I don't know about the Hawley-Smoot tariff act!) So you still got that to look forward to. (Also, twelve hundred reviews of records you'll never think about again.)

But if last month felt like a long walk thru the deserts of Athas fear not cuz this month our canteens overfloweth with clean, slime free, H-2-Oi! Hydrate you bums!

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BOTA GASTA – Demo: This a three track demo of rough and ready skinhead rock from São Paulo veterans BOTA GASTA. "Vida de Cao" has a metallic gallop that I don't care for. But when the solo swoops in they got me in their pocket. Portuguese might escape me but I *entendo* Oi! music, and "A Verdadeira Voz do Brasil" is a-speaking my language. It's the unique style of S.P. Oi! also found in the sounds of stalwarts like BRONCO ARMY and TUMULTO 64. Things wrap with a live version of "Ódio Em S.P." originally found on their album from 2015, *Todo Dia!!!* The band puts their music up on Spotify so go give a listen and expect a full length sometime this year.

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DRAKKAR–*Dragonheads* CD (Oi!perCat): Viking rock out of Castellón in Valencia limited to 150 pieces. This is DRAKKAR's first release and it's a stunner. Granted, if there is a genre that's even more self-referential than Oi! it's Viking Rock (or D-beat...the "D" stands for "derivative.") But DRAKKAR keeps things so tight I don't really care if it's a bunch of apes piloting the longboat. Does DRAKKAR know "what is good?" I'm sure of it. Can they answer the Riddle of Steel? Based on these raging runes I think so: *"Barbarians invade your land / Blood will stain his swords / No forgiveness, no mercy / Barbarians invade your land!"* That's from "Blood in Europe". In addition to "Blood in Europe," and the title track you get "Odin's Law," "Ocaso" (Sunset), and "Weapons and Flames." Fans of the genre will no doubt flip over this. Email Oipercatrecs@Gmail.com for info. *"Fight 'til you drop / Dead is never enough for him / Wake up for war!"*

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THE EJECTED – *Game of Survival* LP (Randale): I'm grateful for what Jim Brooks and the original members of the EJECTED contributed to Oi! and UK82 but this album and last year's *Back From The Dead* are occasionally catchy but wholly unessential entries into the annals of modern punk. *Game of Survival* finds Jim and a cast of New Guys coloring within the lines of the EJECTED activity book. With the state of the world songs like "Alien Abduction"—about a laddette getting knocked up by aliens—and "Evacuate!"—which is more *Escape from New York* than *Children of Men*—come off as tone-deaf and idiotic in the worst way. The rest of the material on the LP doesn't fare any better. Typical top-two inches of water dealing with vague topics such as public unrest, getting drunk, how much going to work sucks (*plays "I'm Thick" on repeat while banging head against table*), war (Good? Bad? Dunno!) There's not an angle where I see this as worth the petrol it's printed on. If mindless pogo is your goal you can do better than this (literally *anything* in Andrew Underwood's column.) Concise social commentary? Move along, Punk. MACC LADS-esque pathetique for today's yobs? Tough luck, it's not even stupid-clever. Plus there's a goddamned reggae-jam at the end (Pick it up! Pick it up! And throw it away!) I blame you Randale!

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FALCATA – *Forged in Blood* EP (Combate Brutal): Combate Brutal brings us the second EP from the Lisbon Lusitaniacs FLACATA! We're treated to three tracks of straightforward hard edged Oi! that is becoming the de rigueur sound of Portugal's thriving Oi! scene. Lace your boots tight cuz you'll be stomping skulls to this baby (around your bedroom? Mom's basement? Grandparent's billiards dungeon?!) If tunes about beating unbeatable odds, standing with friends against society's rules, and calling out bullshit artists are of interest give *Forged in Blood* a trial spin on Youtube. Then head over to Discogs and buy a copy from some dude in Spain for like $15 + $20 shipping cuz this sucker is limited to 200 pieces and is sold out. Blorf!

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FUERZA BRUTA – *Verdugo* 12" (Foreign Legion / Under Watchful Eyes): Oi! is a niche genre. Don't let its ubiquity at the moment fool you. Yinz might love RIXE but yinz got no room for say the WOLVERINES or PARA-ELITE. It's fun to flirt, but fucking is outta the question. I believe FUERZA BRUTA are DTF. But hear me now, this record will be / has been gobbled up by the same people FUERZA BRUTA rail against on their Bandcamp page, "...When did these rich snobby punks that turn their noses up at skins start swooning over French Oi? Did the No Fun Club lift the moratorium on short hair and cuffed jeans?" They did and they bought yer record dudes (a few skins did as well.)

But I digress; this is a single-sided 12" that comes in three editions with different etchings and colors. Each is limited to 100 pieces I think. I won't go into detail about the different editions—check the Discogs page—all sold out, one copy going for €35 as of writing. I pre-ordered the "Medieval Edition" from UWE so long ago I forgot and was momentarily crestfallen when I thought I had missed out.

Talking tuneage, *Verdugo* contains eight songs of fast-as-fuck hostile Oi! The drums and bass create a furious wall of sound which the guitars are overdriven into. Vocals are in Spanish and delivered with a desperate urgency. I mean fuck. Is that a keyboard that swoops *in media res* on "Nación Dividida"?! Smart! It's good stuff. Lyrics are printed in Spanish and English which means I can share these fine lines from "Hijos De La Calle" with you: *"In the city / Something new comes / Something you've never seen / Feral kids in boots and bombers / Terrorizing bars / Disturbing the scene / We're having fun / But we've got a lot to say!"* If you're a jean-creamer for ROGUE TROOPER, CONCRETE ELITE or BATTLE

RUINS then I'm sure your pupils will dilate and pulse will quicken and yer nether regions will engorge with blood for FUERZA BRUTA. Sexually charged review, huh?!

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KING'S CROSS – Break the Silence 12" (Powerfist): Finlandic warriors arise! They shoulda slapped a "Skins Only" warning on this beast cuz only the Chosen Few are gonna be able to stand the aural assault of pride, power, and patriotism (for Finland) these four songs deliver.

Skinhead Rock with notes of Viking is the Oi! du jour on *Break the Silence*. Read these persuasive poetics from "Not my Battle": *"Fuck the left and the capitalist right / Your propaganda war, now that's your fight / A working class skinhead is who I am / My family, my country is where I'll make my stand!"* KING'S CROSS keep it simple. The title track might be about Finnish politics but it might as well be about the current glut of safe and soft Oi! being pumped out these days. See if this fits, *"We are surrounded by silence / Long gone are the days of violence / No one has nothing to say anymore / Fear has silenced the lion's roar!"* Truth! "Lost Spirit" is about an apparent lack of pride among the northern masses. I got no skin (Oi!) in that game so all I got to say is that it's a heavy song with a killer guitar solo that weaves in and out. "Thoughts and Prayers" may be the strongest song of the record, musically and lyrically. It's a condemnation of terrorist acts as well as a call to withdraw from conflicts in the Middle East. It also contains some sick guitar work. KING's CROSS and Power Fist have outdone themselves on this debut. Lyric sheet included. Limited to 250. Get on the hunt.

***

NEVSKY STOMPERS - *Сделано в России* EP (Mangy Little Mutt / Tough Aint Enough): Four songs of slick Hardcore laced contemporary Oi! from the streets of Saint Petersburg. It reminds me of a mix between BERLINER WEISSE and STRIKE BACK. The vocals are well done; they have a pile-on crew vibe to them where it sounds like the whole band is shouting along. It works well with the harsh – to my Yankee ears – Russian language. "Холодный край" is the stand out track for me. It translates as "Cold Land" and serves as homage to Northwestern Russia. It's a solid EP, but on the lackluster side of things.

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THE TEMPLARS – *Deus Vult* LP (Pirates Press / Randale / Templecombe): Hey dummies! It's a new TEMPLARS record! It's been twelve years since the band dropped an LP. They've kept us diehards satiated with periodic splits and near-novelty records (though a single-song EP b/w an etching will forever get an air jerk from the Gang.)

The record opens with a long clip from Amando de Ossorio's classic *La Noche Del Terror Ciego* and then blasts into "Take a Stand." *Deus Vult* find the Poor Knights of Acre right back where they belong, crafting raw street-level anthems bereft of streetpunk schlock or Hardcore crutchery. I'll resist the temptation to go track-by-track. A grip of the songs on the album take aim at the political and economic elite—"A Storm is Brewing," "Propaganda," "Devil's Hand" —while universal struggles are given a write up as well—"Misspent Youth" and "Living on the Outside." Throughout the album the TEMPLARS maintain a tone of endurance and stoicism.

A song that pops out early as a future classic is the COUNT BISHOPS-esque "Middle Road"; *"They come at me from the left / And they come at me from the right / I always stand my ground cuz / I know what's wrong and what's right / The harder they try / The harder they fail / Still they push their lies / But the truth will always prevail / Standing at the crossroads between a rock and a hard place / Never felt I was born to lose even though I stand accused."* Here's to eschewing identity politics and embracing critical thinking! Oi!

The whole album is a winner. It's difficult to rank the TEMPLARS discography cuz they've never put out a terrible record. But if I had to I'd say *Deus Vult* is on level with *1118-1312*. It rules, ok?! *"Short hair...Heavy boots...Big beat!"* is the truth! Oi!

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We'll take our leave until next month! SFFS!

ENDNOTES:

1) americanbootgang@gmail.com is the address to digitally shake my hand.

2) I post record porn (some of which that is too risqué for the pages of *MRR*) on my Instagram: @TurboJorgensen

3) Vacation was great. Everyone I know in Denver has kids but is keeping it poly. SF was a quick run thru Uber clogged streets catching up with a few old friends. I intended to kick it at *MRR* HQ but I was three hours late so Joan and I shook hands and then she had to hide from the landlord cuz she wasn't on the lease. Punx, smh. I did see inside though...It's nice. Dirty dishes in the sink. No biggie. I saw the TEMPLARS in Oakland. That was rad. They played 5 encores, dressed up like Knights Templar (doi!) and seemingly only I and about 6 other rowdies—blacked out drunx?—like to dance. And by "dance" I mean wreck the rest of the audience's quiet evening while they try to watch a band and hold onto their mixed drinks. Splash! I jammed down to LA and hung out with some fine folks and handed out Halloween candy to kids in Montecito Heights. Winners of the night were a 3 year old David the Gnome and some toddlers dressed like Cheech and Chong. Thanks to all homies! See you again soon!

JOAN sez PEACE FUKER

After over a year of internal debate as well as gatekeeping from the medical establishment, I have finally received a prescription for the medications that I need to treat my gender dysphoria. And by the time you receive this issue of *Maximum Rocknroll*, I will be on month one of my daily regime of taking Spironolactone (which blocks androgens such as testosterone and decreases its production) and Estradol (a form of estrogen). I will most likely be taking these two medications for the rest of my life. I've never been happier.

Partly because few people outside of LGBTQI circles know much about Hormone Replacement Therapy (or HRT, which is shorthard for the medical treatment transgender people may receive to combat gender dysphoria) and partly because of an increased interest as of late in transgender issues, I feel compelled to share with you the effects that these medications will have on my body, my emotions, and my social world in my future columns. HRT has been described by many, including medical professionals, as putting a second puberty. This means that it brings not only physical changes but also the tumultuous rollercoaster of emotions that we associate with teenagers. The emotional changes that come with HRT have been described as if a great veil is lifted, allowing a fuller, more intense spectrum of feelings. In order to give you a clear picture of my transition, I will spare very few details.

It is fitting that these changes occur at the end of the year, a time often associated by pagans as a time of death and rebirth. I can safely say goodbye (and good fucking riddance) to my testosterone-ridden body; I look forward to seeing estrogen's influence bloom.

We should all hope for change in a broader scale in 2018, even if it may be wishful thinking. I hope for the ruin of the good old boys network and for the dismantling of rape culture. I hope that for more successful struggles in our quest for equal rights, for demilitarization of police, for the end of the drug war, for the destruction of gentrification, and for the death of capitalistm and authoritarianism. Cheers to those who fight.

joan@maximumrocknroll.com

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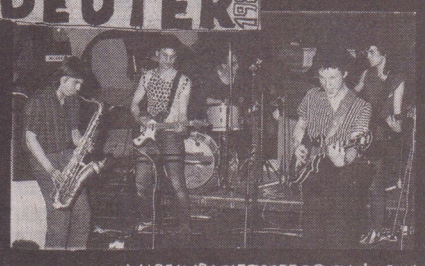
(DEMOS 1985-1987)
WPR 005 MOSKWA - NIGDY! LP (DEMO '86)
WPR 004 H.C.P. - POZYTYWNY STAN ŚWIADOMOŚCI 1989 LP
(DISCOGRAPHY)
WPR 003 THE CORPSE - FIGHT AGAINST RULES LP
(DEMO '88 + TRACK FROM '89)
WPR 002 ABADDON - WET ZA WET LP
(REISSUE '86)
WPR 001 MOSKWA - STUDIO '84 7" EP
(UNRELEASED SESSION)

OUT NEXT:
ABADDON - JAROCIN '84 12"
MOSKWA - DEMO 1984 12"

DEUTER 1981



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NERVOUS INTENT RECORDS

KENNY KENNYOHOH
I WILL NOT NEGOTIATE TAPE
OUT NOW! Four women playing powerful, raw, political action PUNK from Leipzig! Tape of the new album (vinyl on Contraszt!). FFO: Kamikatze, Mülheim Asozial, Tožì Babe, A-Heads

STREET EATERS
New LP from Oakland/ Berkeley truewave punks! Saturated, noisy postpunk concept album inspired by radical antiauthoritarian, gender revolutionary, dystopian author Ursula K. LeGuin THE ENVOY
For Fans Of: Masshysteri, Wipers, Huggy Bear, Burning Kitchen

CROOKED BANGS: II
New LP from these Austin-based freak-punk destroyers! Noisy, smoky noir wavepunk, French/English lyrics, fabulously negative. FFO: Babes In Toyland, Rudimentary Peni, Lost Sounds.

LEVITATIONS: DUST TAPE
Tape release of debut LP (vinyl on Adagio830) from jagged Berlin postpunk power trio! FFO: Diät, Slant 6, DA!, Arctic Flowers.

FREQUENCY OF THE TRUEWAVE VOL II
Latest version of the FTW comp tape! PRIESTS, SHOPPING, STREET EATERS, RAGANA, CROOKED BANGS, TROIKA, NO BABIES, MOZART, DAISY WORLD, SPLIT FEET, LIE, COMPOSITE, VIOLENCE CREEPS, STRANGE FACES, NAIVE

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SLOPE RECORDS

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★U.S.★
BOMBS

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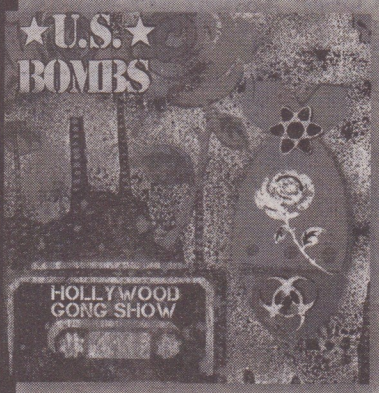

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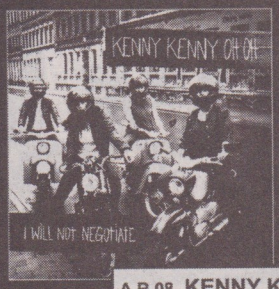

A.R.08 KENNY KENNY OH OH
I WILL NOT NEGOTIATE LP

MORE ABFALL: SHORT DAYS, GEWALTBEREIT, FCKR, BRONCO LIBRE, MIDNIGHT CRISIS, ALIEN PLACENTA
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SIX TWO FIVE

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Mind-melting cosmic blast
MANHUNT - Debut LP
Australian brutal fastcore
COMPLETED EXPOSITION - LP
Completely crazed Japanese blastcore
SUFFERING MIND - Second LP
Blasting Polish anti-fascist grind
INTERNAL ROT/MANHUNT Split EP
Blistering Australian PV and Grind
MELLOW HARSHER/INTERNAL ROT EP
Split 7" of int'l blasting insanity
FLIP OUT AxAx - 2 new EPS
Tokyo Fastcore,x-LIE! Limited press
MELLOW HARSHER - Demo EP
Brutal blasting! Members of SFN
KUNGFU RICK - 2xCD Discog
Legendary blasting from Chicago
SLIGHT SLAPPERS - Ashita LP
Legendary Tokyo Power-violence
QUATTRO STAGIONI - LP
Crazed 1000mph German fastcore!
SxFxN - Itching EP
Blazing Midwest powerviolence - 2nd EP
GET DESTROYED - 2 EPs
1000mph AZ desert power-violence
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GRAND INVINCIBLE EP: Bay Area DIY Hip-HOP
NO TIME LEFT 10"LP: High energy HC
LETS GROW - EP Serbian Positive HC
THREATENER Discog CD: 1000mph blasting
ATHRENODY CD Early 90s Death/Grindcore
BREAKFAST/SFP Split CD: Tokyo skatecore
KUNGFU RICK - Disco 2xCD:Insane grind/HC
IRON LUNG/SHANK CD-Audio Brutality
BREAKFAST 2nd LP:Tokyo skate-thrash
SECOND OPINION - CD High Energy thrash
BARBARIC THRASH CD COMPS:Euro,CaliComps
DISCARGA CD -Brazilian fast political HC
CRUCIAL SECTION-LP: 80s RIPCORD-thrash
SEEIN RED / FPO CD: Pissed European HC
MACHINEGUN ROMANTICS-CD:Pre-HATRED SURGE
QUILL/I DONT CARE-Split CD:Tokyo thrash
HE WHO CORRUPTS CD: Corporo-grind-o-caust
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DEAD TANK RECORDS

ON THE LABEL...

PERMANENT MAKEUP "SCRAPE" LP
Bouncy, angry tracks collide with the demonically woozy. Fans of Unwound, Shellac, Red Monkey, Polvo shall appreciate this FL band.

MRTEX / KELUT split LP
Modern, screamy, dark hardcore from both bands.
Mrtex is ex-Jenny Piccolo / Yaphet Kotto. Kelut has members of Yusuke.

MEATWOUND "TRASH APPARATUS" 7"
Noise laden grooves, violent surges from ex- Combatwoundedveteran, The Holy Mountain. Harsh 90s influences. Industrial sonic landscape.

VACANCY "EMPTY HEAD" TAPE
Tampa upstarts in the realm of Pissed Jeans, Torche, and a little Rohnert Park era Ceremony.

LUNGLUST "WAR AT HOME" 7"
Pissed grinding hardcore from Boston. Unsettling sense of urgency. For fans of Tragedy, Wolfbrigade.

AMYGDALA "POPULATION CONTROL" LP
Blistering tracks of politically minded screamo / hc punk touching on the subjects of child sexual abuse, patriarchy, misogyny and colorism. Sonically akin to Saetia, Ampere, Saligia, Pg.99...

CLOUD RAT "CLIPPED BEAKS // SILK PANIC" 2xCD - Soon...

RECENT DISTRO ADDITIONS...

Tropiezo "La Historia 1997-2017" LP
Fragment "In The Dust" LP
Chepang "Dadhelo - A Tale of Wildfire" LP
Red Death "Formidable Darkness" LP
Acephalix "Decreation" Tape
Calques "Civilizing" Tape
Thou "Peasant" 2xLP
Gay Kiss "Rounded Down" 7"
Rashomon "Demo 2017" 7"
Humiliation "Laughing Wall" 7"
Active Minds "The Age of Mass Distraction
Disrotted / Ledge split LP
Telepathic Lines "Little Brother" 12"
Unarm "Myth and Reality" LP
Dark / Light "Kill Some Time" LP
Enamel "Complete the Lie" Tape
Sacrificio "Pulidores de Tumbas" LP
Grizzlor "Destructoid" LP
Sutekh Hexen / BLSPHM split 7"
Excessive Cruelty "s/t" LP
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MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL's Year-End Top 10s

Did anybody *really* have a good time in 2017? Every year is full of tragedies, but 2017 may have won the award for "Year Most Similar To A Dystopian Novel." With hurricanes, fires, floods, gentrification, increasing class stratification, the rising popularity of the alt-right, and a slew of other calamities (and not to mention the attacks on liberties perpetuated by right wing governments around the world!), it may be hard to keep one's hopes high.

Fortunately, there is always music to help us keep our spirits lifted, ease our emotions, and (well, for some of us) provide us with a sense of purpose. This year, as is our tradition, we asked our shitworkers and friends to discuss their Top Ten (or so) favorite releases from 2017. These were the releases that lead us through our resistance and enabled us to withstand the barrage of bullshit that 2017 blew our way. May they will provide you with the fuel to fight in the years to come. Long live punk rock!

GRACE AMBROSE

Grace Ambrose is a former content coordinator of Maximum Rocknroll. *She plays guitar in MOZART, sings in NEON, and runs the record label Thrilling Living.*

IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER:

AQUARIUM – demo CS (self-released)
Deutschsprachlich fröhlicher lärm.

THE BUG – "Humbug; Or, So Many Awful Things" EP (IFB / Not Normal)
Hardcore as protest noise, what happens when pure kinetic energy, a razorsharp wit, and a bull-headed will to survive collide.

LEBENDEN TOTEN – "Mind Parasites" LP (Overthrow / self-released)
There's only one greatest band in the world.

MIDNITE SNAXXX – "Chew On This" LP (Pelican Pow Wow)
Pitch-perfect melodic punk masterminded by one of the all-time tuffest and coolest Bay Area women, Dulcinea Gonzales.

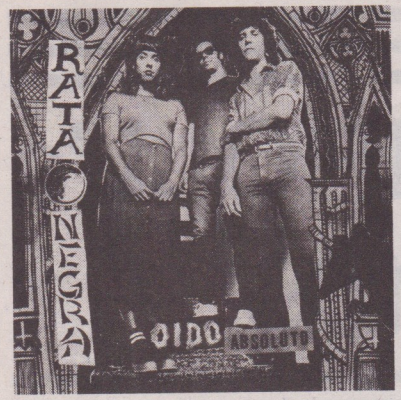
PARSNIP – "Health" EP (Anti-Fade)
As if Dan Treacy split himself into four impossibly cool women.

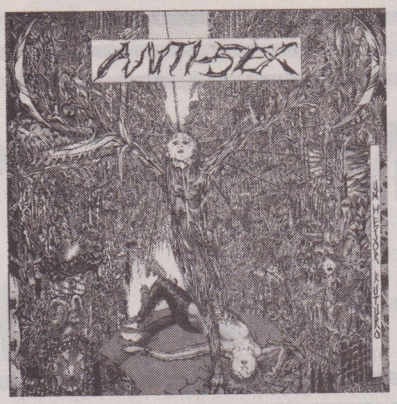
PATSY – "LA Women" 12" (La Vida Es Un Mus)
The only Punk record released this year; the deadpan melodies of Candice's vocals are a revelation, a refactoring of what it means to be a singer.

PIECE WAR – "Apathy" LP (Square One Again)
A cool and sinister salve for the horrors of the world. *"Darkness, Darkness, go away."*

PUSTOSTANY – "2012" LP (Sweet Rot)
Wild Polish bedroom sounds recovered from a tape made in a pre-Lumpy Rex, pre-Marky moment; something like if Hoosier Hysteria! had come out on Ralph Records.

TRÜMMERFRAUEN – LP (Danger)
One more piece of the secret fräulein history laid bare.





DANIEL BECKER

Daniel Becker is a record reviewer for Maximum Rocknroll.

2017 was a cool year for punk rock! It feels like it went by pretty fucking fast. Here's my favorite releases that came out this year.

EXIT ORDER – "Seed Of Hysteria" LP (Side Two / La Vida Es Un Mus)
RATA NEGRA – "Oido Absoluto" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
MODO GECKO – "Sick, Twisted, Psycho, Deranged" LP (Crapoulet / FFud / Stanley Electronics / Twintoe)
TEENAGE BOTTLEROCKET – "Stealing the Covers" LP (Fat Wreck)
ANTI-SEX – "Un Mejor Futuro" LP (Cintas Pepe / Thrilling Living / World Gone Mad)
KIDS INSANE – "Cluster" LP (Redfield)
THE LILLINGTONS – "Stella Sapiente" LP (Fat Wreck)
LIMP WRIST – "Facades" LP (Lengua Armada / La Vida Es Un Mus)
DECENT CRIMINAL – "Bloom" LP (Dodgeball)
HARAM – "When You Have Won, You Have Lost" LP (Toxic State / La Vida Es Un Mus)

BRYONY BEYNON

Bryony Beynon is one of MRR*'s web coordinators and a columnist.*

TOTAL CONTROL – "Laughing at the System" LP (Alter)
The unsurpassable Teflon dons gone done it again. In an era where "no future" sounds like a utopian rallying cry, it's only right to record the sound of yourself laughing and post it to the government. Still better than we deserve, turn inwards or scowl outwards.

RUNT – "Positions of Power" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
Burst blood vessel incantations against the insidious bureaucratic evil of the British state, brittle hardcore to soundtrack your righteous reprisal. Burrowing deep, coming up blank, foaming, raging.

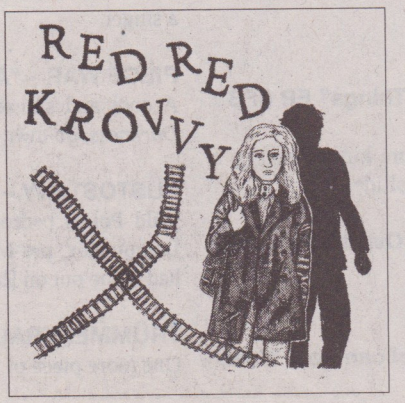
HARAM – "When You Have Won, You Have Lost" LP (Toxic State / La Vida Es Un Mus)
Put aside your "important" platitudes, dummy, and head bang. Punk's reactionary fissures revealed through some much needed clear-eyed truths. The last swathes of irony drummed out of the culture as the struggle realigns with its rightful soundtrack? We'll see. One for the ages.

RED RED KROVVY – LP (Helta Skelta)
"Hey man, you got any Rembrandts?" Arch punk from the big hot island you so foolishly overlook. A high school band from a top corner of it (Cairns) now spread out across the made-up country still making some essential and increasingly sideways takes on the perversity of modern living. Never be an adult. No bass, but they do have a contact mic'd nutribullet and a Kazoo. Get amongst it.

XYLITOL – "Is Toxic to Pigs??" EP (Thrilling Living / Total Negativity)
Nasty ass pogo with the wildest vocals put to record in a hot minute, sufficiently mutant, radiating rubber spike mayhem. I need to see them crush this live. Do the Goblin gallop!!

PRIESTS – "Nothing Feels Natural" LP (Sister Polygon)
Remarkably crystallized output that elevates Priests' enduringly cool vibe into their own personal art form. I hate musicians but I love PRIESTS. A record to carefully unlatch your clenched jaw to and bear witness. P*erhaps I will change*.

FLESH WORLD – "Into The Shroud" LP (Dark Entries)
Visionary beatnik bop. One for walking around unfamiliar cities, ethereal visions of Grace Slick in a leather bounding up some hillside



alleyway with a butch lover in plastic shades, tangled in each other. Knock on the door with the painted spiral. You are home.

SARCASM – "Malarial Bog" EP (Static Shock)
Nothing sounds more like London in its death throes than this. Grind the suited skeletons into brick dust for we need homes. Change at Bank. Teeming at the seams. Theresa's on a comedown. Sparse and haunting, spiteful and knowing, just when you thought it was safe to go back on the tube, here's SARCASM.

GSP – 12" (Thrilling Living)
Burning playground meta-taunts harangue the revolution into being. Concrete idylls, thrill your idols. Skate for fun or not at all. Hymns from Big Sister. Somehow sounds even wilder than you'd imagine a band with these three women—stop saying supergroup—could be, 'cept you already forgot what you predicted cos you're high off the fumes this combo created. (body spray from a corner shop, Olympian patchouli, marker pen.) Tag, you're it, you're totally it.

TERRY – "Remember Terry" LP (Upset The Rhythm)
TERRY found a way to maintain the necessary cynicism on this one while upping the sweet harmos, still never saccharine. You wanna get breathy, sway and chong that green durry to some squelchy country? Tezza's got you. Wanna pogo to super quick foreign policy critiques you'll be humming for days? At the risk of getting fulsome, it's TERRY's Planet, you're just livin' on it.

MITCH CARDWELL

Mitch Cardwell was the inspiration for the title of POISON IDEA's "Kings Of Punk" LP. He is also a record reviewer at MRR.

COLD BEAT – "Chaos By Invitation" LP (Crime On The Moon)
Total commitment to the fully synth'd form, admirably DIY all-around, absolutely nailed start-to-finish. An album I played a ton this year.

FNU CLONE INC. – "Binary Or Die" LP (Total Punk)
Impossibly busted punk crisis. Thankin' my lucky stars I saw the live configuration that included Msr. Woodhouse...'Twas the best live set I caught all year! Do investigate COMPUTER as well.

LIFE STINKS – "Hanging From The Ceiling / Shadow Chilling On The Sidewalk" (Total Punk)
R.I.P. Stinkers—my favorite band is dead dead dead. Good ol' GARY WRONG assists on this A-side, injectin' scuzz-twitch to the depression and depravity. B-side's thirsty and even more miserable.

MIDNITE SNAXXX – "Chew On This" LP (Pelican Pow Wow)
A prime punky pumper! I just can't shake how much I love this album. SNAXXX toiled and emerged anew here, somehow way better than ever before.

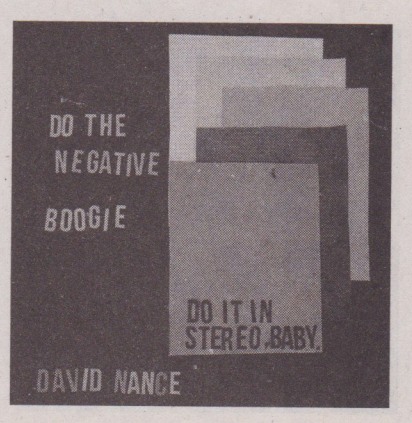
MOZART – "Nasty" EP (Iron Lung)
'Zart caught lightning in a bottle here, the best short-form offering of the year, no contest. Inspiring and truly chaotic punk, no rules—a must-hear.

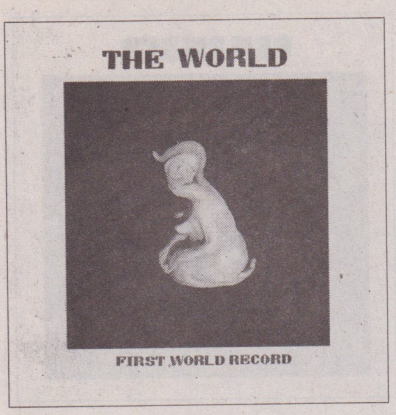
DAVID NANCE – "Do The Negative Boogie" LP (Ba-Da-Bing!)
Homegrown holler, the very sort of shaky guitar scree that reduces me to a puddle of juice! Seek out all discos bearing the Nance name!

PATSY – "LA Women" 12" (La Vida Es Un Mus)
PATSY's so punky that you just gotta react! Note-perfect, time capsule punque classique.

RAYS – LP (Trouble In Mind)
RAYS' absorbing post-it pop—the kind that scoffs, but delivers anyway—makes for the year's top album. The oft-cited Kiwi influence is fine, but it's the downtown '76 murk at play here that just stabs me.

RAZZ – "Time Frames" 12" (Emotional Response)
Theirs is a shaggier, big-beat permutation of catchy rock, one that





removes cringey genre annoyances and simply pops powerfully and punkily.

THE WORLD – "First World Record" LP (Lumpy / Upset The Rhythm)
No bells, one whistle—the band as they are—great, busy and exciting. The most joyous post-punkisms make the whole deal danceable and provocative.

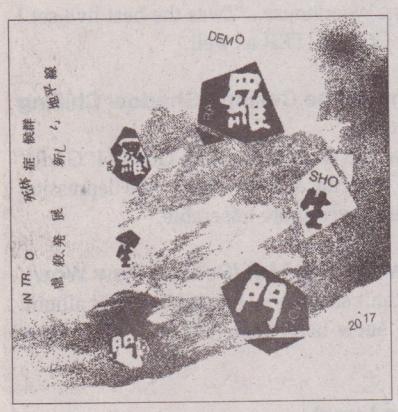
JOAN DETORO

Joan DeToro is the current content coordinator at MRR.

This is the year that I went through some of the largest changes in my life. I abandoned my record store, my friends, my band, and my family to move all the way across the US to coordinate *MRR*. But even more importantly, I went from a normal hesher girl to a living, breathing parody of Scott Vogel from TERROR. Please mosh.

PUNK KILLED HARDCORE:

PATSY – "LA Women" 12" (La Vida Es Un Mus)
INSTITUTE – "Subordination" LP (Sacred Bones)
THE WORLD – "First World Record" LP (Lumpy / Upset The Rhythm)
GSP – 12" (Thrilling Living)
VANILLA POPPERS – LP (Lumpy)

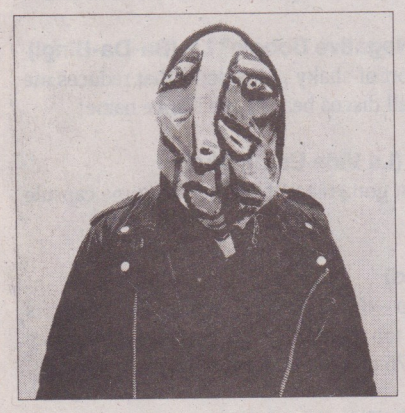


PUNK KILLED PUNK:

PRIESTS – "Nothing Feels Natural" LP (Sister Polygon)
ISS – "(Endless Pussyfooting)" LP (Erste Theke Tonträger)
WARM BODIES – "My Burning Love" EP (Thrilling Living)
LUMPY AND THE DUMPERS – "Those Pickled Fuckers" LP (Lumpy)
HEAVY METAL – "LP2" LP (Static Age)

HARDCORE AS REVENANT:

IMPALERS – "Cellar Dweller" LP (540)
LEBENDEN TOTEN – "Mind Parasites" LP (Overthrow / self-released)
XYLITOL – "Is Toxic To Pigs??" EP (Thrilling Living / Total Negativity)
MURO – "Ataque Hardcore Punk" 12" (Byllepest)
EXIT ORDER – "Seed Of Hysteria" LP (Side Two / La Vida Es Un Mus)



HARDCORE WILL NEVER DIE:

MOZART – "Nasty" EP (Iron Lung)
NEON – "Neon is Life" CS (Thrilling Living)
BARCELONA – "Un Último Ultrasonido Nació Y Murió En Barcelona" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
THE BUG – "Humbug; Or, So Many Awful Things" EP (IFB / Not Normal)
SIAL – LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)

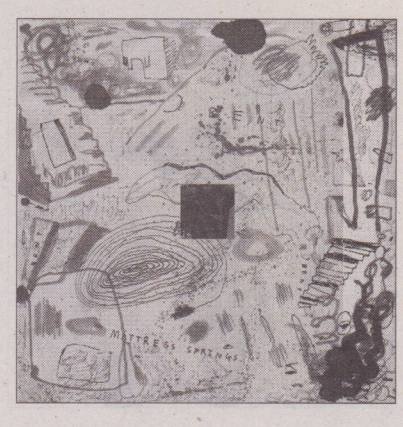
RUNNERS-UP:
DAGGER – "Writhing In The Light Of The Moon" EP (Lengua Armada) / DEVIL MASTER – "Inhabit The Corpse" CS (self-released) / EEL – "Night Parade Of 100 Demons" LP (Beach Impediment) / HARAM – "When You Have Won, You Have Lost" (Toxic State / La Vida Es Un Mus) / KATASTROF – "Falksa Leenden" EP (Beach Impediment) / NEGATIV – "Automatic Thoughts" EP (Byllepest / Discos MMM / Doomtown / Kibou) / PISS – "Stuck In The Gutter" EP (Static Age) / PUSTOSTANY – "2012" LP (Sweet Rot) / RASHŌMON – "Demo 2017" EP (self-released / Society Bleeds) / VITTNA – CS (self-released)

ERIKA ELIZABETH

Erika Elizabeth is a columnist for MRR.

I spent so much of this year feeling relatively disinterested in a lot of the new music that seemed to be making the biggest waves in the greater punk underground, but when I actually sat down to sort out this list, I realized that the records that really stayed with me in 2017 were the ones that, by and large, occupied a much more subtle and unassuming space in the span of these last twelve months. What I *really* wanted to submit was a list of the the top ten times in 2017 that men in my life publicly condemned behaviors that they routinely engaged in with me privately, but alas, that didn't quite meet the guideline of a list of "releases"...

NEW THINGS IN 2017, IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER:



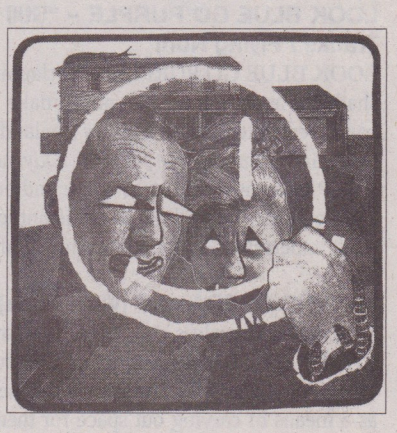
BENT – "Snakes And Shapes" LP (Moontown) and **"Mattress Springs" EP (Emotional Response)**
Brisbane's BENT channel the off-kilter sounds of some of the most warped and wonderful weirdos of the late '70s / early '80s DIY milieu (UT, KLEENEX, the RAINCOATS, et al), but the real thread ultimately connecting them to their post-punk antecedents is their untamed approach to sidestepping the most linear path from point A to point B, and their skill in taking jigsaw parts that have no apparent way of fitting together and devising their own way of piecing them into a joyously askew whole.

BLANK STATEMENTS – "Signs Are Rampant" CS (Hobbies Galore)
At their most raucous, BLANK STATEMENTS sound like a lost femme-punk band in the KLEENEX tradition, but overall, *Signs Are Rampant* leans much closer to the homespun, paper-thin aesthetic of the bands that occupied the fringes of the pre-C86 Rough Trade / Cherry Red post-punk milieu—the MARINE GIRLS especially, but with traces of DOLLY MIXTURE and YOUNG MARBLE GIANTS hiding just beneath the surface (check those minimalist, super-rhythmic bass lines and the wobbly, droning organ).

FLESH WORLD – "Into The Shroud" LP (Dark Entries)
Ethereal yet tough, with jangly, pastel-tinted pop hooks given a severe case of post-punk frostbite. Jess Scott's C86-patented soft focus vocals are delivered with a sneering, leather-jacketed tension lurking just below the surface, just like the *Barbed Wire Kisses* of FLESH WORLD's patron saints in the JESUS AND MARY CHAIN. Serious bonus points for the band being bananas enough to not only tackle a fuzzed-out dream-punk interpretation of SOLID SPACE's '80s bedroom-wave DIY classic "Destination Moon," but to also absolutely nail it.

GSP – 12" (Thrilling Living)
Econo-punk brilliance from three women who are almost certainly cooler than you. Ecstatically shouted, sloganeering gang vocals (my personal favorite: *"what do we want? / total liberation! / what do we get? / a total drag!"*) over twin needling guitars and jumpy drumming in sub-two minute bursts, for all of the Slampt Records dreamers of the 21st century.

MARAUDEUR – LP (Bruit Direct Disques)
Armed with a clattering drum machine, sinister bass lines, icy washes of synth and her perfectly dispassionate vocals, Lise Sutter's one-woman recording project MARAUDEUR occupies the margins between hyper-rhythmic late '70s post-punk (think DELTA 5) and the stark, dystopian aesthetic of early '80s European coldwave. Paranoid sounds for bleary-eyed nights spent wandering the streets of the city.



RANK/XEROX – "M.Y.T.H." 12" (Adagio830)
I was thrilled to see RANK/XEROX reappear with a new EP after a few years of inactivity, and *M.Y.T.H.* perfectly bridges the sinister, frantic post-punk edge of their previous records with the more introspective and melancholy electronic-accented pop songs of guitarist / vocalist David West's RAT COLUMNS project.

RAYS – LP (Trouble in Mind)
Timeless, scrappy pop jangle descended directly from the psychedelic sprawl of the VELVET UNDERGROUND, the kaleidoscopic melodies of the early '80s Dunedin scene centered around the CLEAN and the BATS, and the jittery crazy rhythms of the FEELIES, but also clearly living in the now.

SARCASM – "Malarial Bog" EP (Static Shock)
Bleak, skeletal sounds from London that balances on a highwire of martial, repetitive rhythms and trebly stabs of guitar, rounded out by a vocalist who picks apart the drudgery of modern life with a flawlessly droll detachment. If they'd been around in 1980, they totally would have been playing squats with UK DIY bands like CRISIS and SIX MINUTE WAR who blurred the already thin line between post-punk and anarcho-punk.

THE SHIFTERS – "A Believer / Contrast Of Form" (Market Square)
In the current era of Australian DIY that has yielded more than a handful of bands indebted to the off-kilter asceticism of the Fall, the Shifters have been doing it better than pretty much anyone else. This latest single tips the scales more heavily toward the jangly, pop-focused Flying Nun impulses that had previously underpinned their starkly ramshackle post-punk—the handclaps and jaunty CLEAN-like harmonies of "Contrast and Form" never would have made it past Mark E. Smith quality control, but the warbling organ and shambling rhythms in "A Believer" would have suited him just as well as the Kilgours.

THE WORLD – "First World Record" LP (Lumpy)
Fiery, dancefloor-ready post-punk that pulses with simmering sax, shrill guitar, and the sort of hopscotch rhythms that would have turned some serious heads at Rough Trade circa 1981. Seeing and hearing about so many people understandably flipping their lids over this record is one of the few things to have made any sense at all to me this year.

OLD THINGS MADE NEW AGAIN IN 2017:

COME ON – LP (Manufactured Recordings)
Intertwining guitar scribble and scratch, stutteringly danceable, downtown funk basslines, and buttoned-up vocals nervously yelping Jonathan Richman-esque narratives of (sub)urban naivety, as if the MODERN LOVERS had formed in the post-(not proto-)punk era, drawn their primary inspiration from Television rather than the VELVET UNDERGROUND, and existed on the cusp of No Wave's New York campaign of dissonance and anti-rock reductionism.

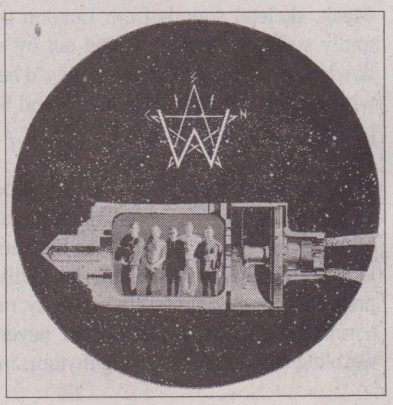
LOOK BLUE GO PURPLE – "Still Bewitched" LP (Captured Tracks / Flying Nun)
LOOK BLUE GO PURPLE's overlapping vocal melodies and knotted, shadowy approach to post-punk make it easy to understand why the band were often hailed as New Zealand's version of the RAINCOATS (especially during the latter's *Odyshape* / *Moving* era), although LBGP were never quite as spiky and ecstatically raw as their English counterparts. A very long overdue anthology of one of the greatest and most underrated Flying Nun bands of all time.

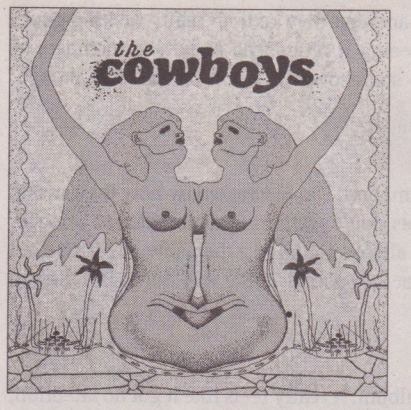
MORBID OPERA – LP (Vinyl Rites)
Like the more-or-less concurrently existing NEO BOYS in Portland or CHALK CIRCLE in Washington, DC, the women of Florida's MORBID OPERA (plus some rotating boy guitarists) started playing music together as a means of carving out space for themselves in a very heavily male-dominated local DIY scene, crafting songs with a raw, ragged jangle that stood in total opposition to the loud/fast orthodoxy that had taken hold as punk mutated into hardcore by the mid-1980s. Killer stripped-down '60s garage stomp-meets-'80s punk slash for and by subnormal girls.

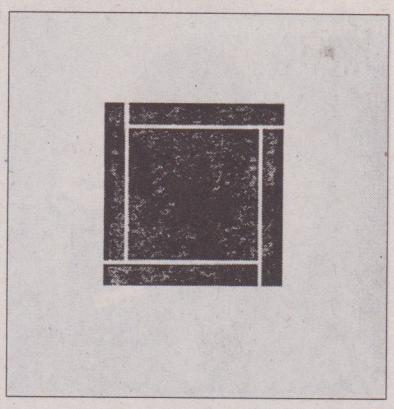
PERFORMING FERRET BAND – LP (Discos Alehop / Beat Generation) and **"Brow Beaten" EP (Insolito)**
The history of the PERFORMING FERRET BAND should sound pretty familiar to anyone with even a cursory interest in scrappy, flipped-out late '70s / early '80s DIY in the UK: art-minded school friends acquire a reel-to-reel tape recorder and try their hand at making music inspired by the dryly absurd sensibilities of Monty Python and aided by "a broken tambourine, a mandolin case for a drum, a kazoo, and a pair of plastic sandals." Flatly-delivered vocals, seemingly non-sequitur lyrics, clattering drums, trebly guitar lines usually consisting of two or three notes at most—the textbook *Messthetics* band, really.

REPTILE RANCH – LP (C/Site)
Cardiff, Wales's slightly more spiral scratched counterpart to YOUNG MARBLE GIANTS' severe, minimalist post-punk, by way of the Desperate Bicycles' shouty and shambolic approach to econo-punk that basically defined UK DIY as we now know it. Pretty essential for all enthusiasts of the hastily cut-up and cheaply Xeroxed musical contributions of late '70s/early '80s art-damaged oddballs.

SOLID SPACE – "Space Museum" LP (Dark Entries)
One of the most coveted artifacts of the '80s cassette underground *finally* gets an official vinyl reissue! Dan Goldstein and Matthew Vosburgh of SOLID SPACE started making music together as teenagers in the late '70s in the more straightforward post-punk group EXHIBIT A, and in 1982, the duo (now reconfigured as SOLID SPACE) recorded *Space Museum*, combining the minimalist UK DIY influences of their previous project with airy, atmospheric proto-C86 pop melodies and the sort of experimentation with drum machines, synths, and samples that would soon be much more commonplace as post-punk gave way to minimal wave and synth-pop in the early '80s. Hauntingly beautiful. The reissue even includes a previously unreleased Marine Girls cover!







TRÜMMERFRAUEN – LP (Danger)
Three women in the Rhineland find each other in 1979 as the result of an advertisement seeking members for a feminist punk group, learn their way around their respective instruments as they go (eventually bringing in a fourth fräulein on synth), and over the course of about two years, they record some perfectly skeletal and trebly DIY post-punk splitting the difference between the dark Neue Deutsch Welle of MALARIA! and spiky KLEENEX clatter.

VOIGT/465 – "Slights Still Unspoken LP (Mental Experience)
Late '70s Aussie art-damaged rabble-rousers who pulled from glam rock, psychedelia, proto-punk/early punk, and Krautrock to craft their own take on spiky post-punk with dueling male/female vocals and off-kilter, stop/start rhythms—ESSENTIAL LOGIC if they'd swapped their sax for synths, or an Australian precursor to SUBURBAN LAWNS?

Y PANTS – 12" and **"Beat It Down" LP (Water Wing)**
In a No Wave-era scene full of these conceptually-minded sonic provocateurs, Y PANTS were among the most sharp, sardonic, and simultaneously playful—three women playing economical, off-kilter art-clatter with a lyrical eye cast toward traditionally-perceived gender roles, the failings of modern romance, and favorite sweaters.

NICOLE EVERTO

Nicole Everto is the columns coordinator at MRR.

My Top Not-Quite-Ten list is short for a few reasons: I loved two things that were major label releases and that's not allowed on these pages, and I loved some things that I'm not comfortable listing because I've since become suspicious about the people who created those things. I felt pretty stuck this year in both the strangest and most obvious of ways and that's reflected in what I loved—I preferred the sounds that were tried and true because far too many other places in our world were unstable and full of hidden garbage fires so I can't say I was feeling especially experimental when it comes to music. The list does reflect something positive: how fucking happy I was to spend this year in Oakland. Bye forever, 2017.

CROOKED BANGS – "II" LP (Nervous Intent)
KING WOMAN – "Created In The Image of Suffering" LP (Relapse)
ÖTZI – "Ghosts" LP (LastHour / Near Dark)
POWER TRIP – "Nightmare Logic" LP (Southern Lord)
SHEER MAG – "Need To Feel Your Love" LP (Wilsuns)
V/A – "Evaluate What You Tolerate!" CS (self-released)
V/A – "Typical Girls Volume 2" LP (Emotional Response)

MIRANDA FISHER

Miranda Fisher is the newest content coordinator for MRR*! Her first issue as coordinator will be the March 2018 issue, so stay on the lookout to see her handiwork! She is also the creator of the* Casting Couch *zine.*

My understanding is that now that I am the new content coordinator you have to immediately stop listening to whatever shit you thought you liked and start listening to what I have determined to be the top ten records of the year, listed in some kind of vague order below.

STEFAN CHRISTENSEN – "Shake Off The Village" LP (C/Site)
I enjoyed this LP more than anything else I heard that came out in 2017. It's so multifaceted that it's hard to describe what it sounds like. It's "experimental," I guess, but every choice seems intentional. Just hit me in a very visceral, emotional way that nothing else seemed to this year.

THE COWBOY – "The Cowboy Album" LP (Drunken Sailor / Fashionable Idiots)
It's strange and frankly kind of annoying that there are bands called

both the COWBOY and the COWBOYS in the same scene and that they're both really fucking good. I put off listening to this one for a while because I kept seeing it referenced as having members of HOMOSTUPIDS, a band that just never quite did it for me somehow. I'm all in on this one, though. Perfectly succinct punk rock that's brutal in its simplicity.

MORDECAI – "Abstract Recipe" LP (Richie)
MORDECAI is one of the best bands in the world in my estimation. I'm fascinated by how their music doesn't really fit into any category, and how they themselves don't seem to much be part of a scene. Everything they've done so far has a real point of view; they always sound like themselves. That's kind of a dumb thing to say because none of it would matter if what they sounded like was shitty. But they're really fucking good at writing cool songs and playing them.

WICCANS – "Sailing A Crazy Ship" LP (Dull Tools)
I've always liked, but not loved, WICCANS. But I love this album. It really feels like it got no attention, which I don't understand at all. To me, it's by far the best thing they've ever done—it feels more cohesive somehow. Heavy riffs and gruff vocals are coming together to create something greater than the sum of its parts. I came back to this one a lot this year, more than I expected to.

THE COWBOYS – LP (HoZac)
We're lucky to live in a time when this band keeps writing perfect, slightly off-kilter pop / rock songs. Furthermore, I think we're lucky that they've somehow landed in the punk scene. Even though they clearly don't consider themselves punk, there's something punk in the approach here.

MARK CONE – "Now Showing" LP (Neck Chop)
I liked this one more than I was supposed to. It's so goofy and over the top in its theatrical synthpunk that it definitely comes across as a joke, but I'd rather hear a good joke than a bad drama any day of the week.

REPTILE RANCH – LP (C/Site)
I wasn't expecting to like this quite so much when I first listened to it. '70s + Welsh + SCRITTI POLITTI connection just made me think I'd find it boring, I guess. It's not boring. It's fascinating and gorgeous. As a bonus, the packaging is just as beautiful as the music.

MICK TROUBLE – "It's The Mick Trouble EP" EP (Emotional Response)
Not really big on the idea of aping dead genres in general, but I do appreciate the trolling here, with the fake story and TELEVISION PERSONALITIES connection. These are some beautiful pop songs—"Miss Margaret" alone is good enough for me to forgive whatever baggage comes with it.

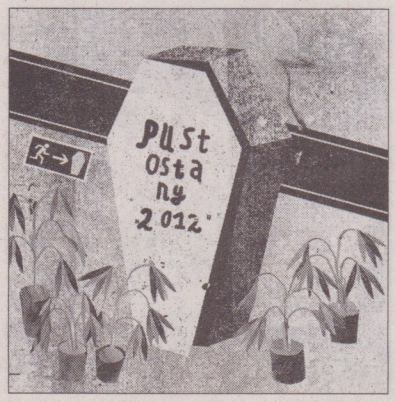
BEATNIKS – "Beatnik Theme" EP (Neck Chop)
This is sort of the flip of the MICK TROUBLE record, to me—it's referencing a genre (in this case, proto-punk), but updating it, modernizing it. Simple but not straightforward.

NAG – "No Flag" EP (Space Taker)
Just very nice, well-done dark punk music. Angular and anxious, and over too soon.

LAYLA GIBBON

Layla Gibbon is a former content coordinator at Maximum Rocknroll *as well as a member of gSp.*

What's the cliché, writing about music is like dancing about art?! There were so many records I flipped out over during this terrible desolate brutal year, I had a list of twenty LPs to whittle down! And that was just the LPs! So many options! I am gonna make a list on my blog that includes non *MRR* reviewable sounds too (Whatwewantisfree.blogspot.com) but here are my rants and raves:



PARSNIP – "Health" EP (Anti-Fade)
Late entry! I was notified about this band's existence by current Australian correspondent Grace Ambrose and my mind was immediately blown apart by its true UKDIY meets mod perfection. I was psychically forced into mail-ordering immediately upon first listen! Four women from Melbourne who visually seem to have walked out of a teen girl mag circa 1965 making music that brings to mind to most blissful shambolic C-86'd sounds of the TELEVISION PERSONALITIES, but also the movie *Daisies*. Playful subversion that sounds at once wry, charming, and acerbic, a garage pop dream pie.

PATSY – "LA Women" 12" (La Vida Es Un Mus)
UKDIY directional shamble meets ice cool L.A. 1978 punk dreams. Candice has the voice to

communicate to all other worlds what punk is and then there is that perfect guitar sound, like listening to "Ghost on the Highway" on 45...I only like drums that sound either murderous or collapsing and this is both at once. Oh the allure of PATSY, what a dream, what a group! If you only want to listen to KLEENEX and RED CROSS at this juncture of the end of the world, if you want to hear the sound of sneering delight, of true joyous insurrection, this 12" is the eloquent yet snotty answer to all your problems. The way "Society Ape" switches to "Nazi's Are So Plain" is the stuff dreams are made of. An actual perfect 12" and an easy contender for record of the year. Hardcore.

MARAUDEUR – LP (Bruit Direct Disques)
Someone I know was complaining about all the bands that are current but simulating the sounds of cool female-directed art punk bands circa 1981, and as my eyes rolled to the back of my head I thought of the past 17 years watching historically accurate reenactment all-dude HC bands play the same idea night after night in show spaces across America...Finally! There is an avalanche of genius wild nervous damage sound for all kindsa girls that have ELECTRIC EELS and MALARIA! problems. This does sound like something from one of those *Subnormal Girls* comps, but that is what I want out of life. I want frantic / nervous energy, collapsing keyboards and sputtering rhythms, and cool female vocals over the end of the world Ballardian creep sound. This LP is a breath of fresh air, of ideas and charisma and cool...

NOTS – "Cruel Friend / Violence" (Goner)
NOTS put out three 45s and a live LP in 2017. All were killer of course, but something about this one really set it above the rest, it's a truly great 45. The A-Side is so sick, chopped up antagonistic dada KBD perfection, repetition of the words "Cruel Friend" making the sound even more unrecognizable delirious and frantic! Then the fucking B-Side! With its strange creepy crawly feeling, sort of Dario Argento No Wave art school girls out for blood and fear...That keyboard sound, it's for female protagonists that can control insects with their minds. Truly otherwordly! A reversed xerox of our times.

LOUIE LOUIE – "Friend of a Stranger" LP (Born Losers)
I have no idea how I even found this, it didn't get sent into *MRR*, but is so exactly my idea of a good time. *Girls in the Garage* dream snot. Imagine the first BANGS 45 if they made an album with Bomp! and avoided the whole major label hair ballad move. Conjure up in your mind the sickest, yet sweetest, girl group sound through the thick haze of bedroom psyche. Bubblegum for modernists.

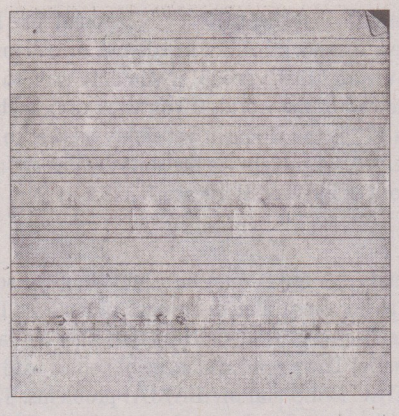
MOZART – "Nasty" EP (Iron Lung)
Like listening to DIE KREUZEN backwards, simultaneous no wave buildings collapse hardcore that's like getting pummeled by the ocean and reading the *S.CU.M. Manifesto* all at once. Fave Bay Area ragers since PIG DNA. Girl geniuses hate cops...

PUSTOSTANY – "2012" LP (Sweet Rot)
I don't really know what the deal is with this record. It was a tape from 2012 that got made into a record this year and the band is from Poland. I am truly grateful a copy made it into the *MRR* compound, as it is wild and cool and cantankerous and hard to get out of your brain once you've heard the strange shapes it presents. It reminds me of a Polish version of VENOM P STINGER! But it's way less swaggering than that and more in the direction of a less contained RONDOS or something between those two bands that I am unable to put into words. It's fucking wild art Eastern European punk.

MORDECAI – "What is Art?" EP (Sophomore Lounge)
Truly great! Title track is a bashed out mixtape must have that fans of music will clutch to their very beings...Rest of this now classic 45 follows suite with Montana dissonant reality strike on MIKE REP bands, COUNTRY TEASERS, certain eras of the EMBARRASSMENT, VU shambled guitars, direct vocalizations, this is another milestone for your collection. How much art can you take? Only this kind.

SCHOOL DAMAGE – LP (Chapter)
Australian music dominates the dreamscape. This sounds like a band that could have played with the MARINE GIRLS and features members of PARSNIP and AUSMUTEANTS. The keyboards have that perfect YOUNG MARBLE GIANTS sound, the male / female vocals are dreamy and this was one of those things where you hear the bandcamp and immediately hunt out a copy. Timeless sounds for anorak-wearing nostalgists of a certain type.

RUNNER UPS:
BENT – "Mattress Springs" EP (Emotional Rescue) / PALBERTA – "Bye Bye Berta"LP (Wharf Cat) / HEAVY METAL – "LP2" LP (Static Age) / LEBENDEN TOTEN – "Static!" 12" (Iron Lung) / GAUCHE – "Get Away With..." LP (Danger) / the COWBOY – "The Cowboy Album" LP (Drunken Sailor / Fashionable Idiots) / TERRY – "Remember Terry" LP (Upset The Rhythm) / PIERRE ET BASTIEN –



"Musique Grecque" LP (SDZ) / PROM NITE – "Dancing To This Beat" LP (Barfbag) / ANDY HUMAN UND DAS REPTOIDS – "Refrigerator / You Don't Even Know" (Total Punk) / SAYLAVEES – "Crimson Rose" EP (Ugly Pop) / POLICE CONTROL – "Sentimental" EP (Gone With The Weed / Juvenile Delinquent) / JANITOR SCUM – "Scenes From The Grocery" LP (Lumpy) / FLESH WORLD – "Into The Shroud" LP (Dark Entries) / RANK/XEROX – "M.Y.T.H." 12" (Adagio830) / MR WRONG – "Babes In Boyland" 12" (Water Wing) / RAYS – LP (Trouble In Mind) / RAKTA – "Oculto Pelos Seres" EP (Iron Lung / La Vida Es Un Mus)

TOP TAPES / DEMOS:
BLANK STATEMENTS – "Signs Are Rampant" CS (Hobbies Galore) / LITHICS – "Wendy Kraemer" CS (self-released) / AQUARIUM – demo CS (self-released) / NEON – "Neon Is Life" CS (Thrilling Living) / STIFF LOVE – "For The Whole Family" CS (Chapel of Crimes) / WARM BODIES – "Eat Snot And Rot!" CS (self-released) / JUDY AND THE JERKS – "Alive At The Skatepark" CS (Earth Girl)

REISSUES:
Y-PANTS – "Beat It Down" LP (Water Wing) / NON-BAND – LP (Tal) / COMET GAIN – "Réalistes" and "City Fallen Leaves" LP (M'lady's) / DENDÖ MARIONETTE – LP (Bitter Lake / Mouse) / NEON – "Neon / Nazi Schatzi" (Water Wing) / WRETCHED – "Libero E Selvaggio" 4xEP boxset (Agipunk / Chaos Produzioni) / PIECE WAR – "Apathy" LP (Square One Again) / LOOK BLUE GO PURPLE – "Still Bewitched" LP (Captured Tracks / Flying Nun) / NURSE – "Discography 1983–1984" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus) / TRÜMMERFRAUEN – LP (Danger) / MORBID OPERA – LP (Vinyl Rites)

DAN GOETZ

Dan Goetz is a record reviewer at MRR.

Year Ten of ten records that made my year.

LIMP WRIST – "Facades" LP (Lengua Armada / La Vida Es Un Mus)
This record sounds like the product of four people who have lived and shared life with all its shit and joy for the better part of twenty years. It's, dare I say, mature, but in the best way possible, and the lyric writing and artistic approach is undeniably eternal Martín. It's also very cool to see them use their platform to showcase so many queer artists' work in the booklet that comes with the LP.

LIQUIDS – "Hot Liqs" LP (Hip Kid / Not Normal)
The time you would waste reading what I think of this record would be better spent listening to it.

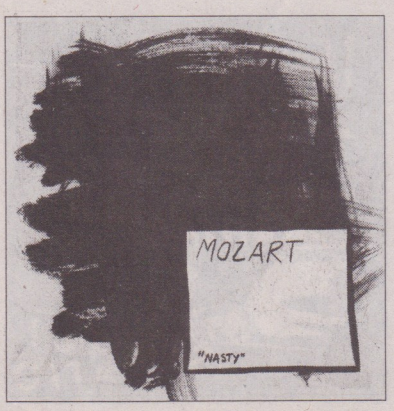
VANILLA POPPERS – LP (Lumpy)
It took me a while to warm up to this one, since it doesn't quite have the same scuzzy sound of last year's mind-blowing 7", but they are undeniably one of the best bands going.

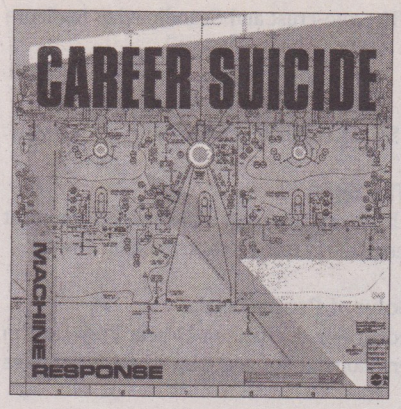
XYLITOL – "Is Toxic To Pigs??" EP (Thrilling Living / Total Negativity)
Doing the goblin gallop all over everything that is stupid / boring / shitty about punk, and taking the "live the chaos" banner from the long-irrelevant BLATZes and FILTHs of the old world.

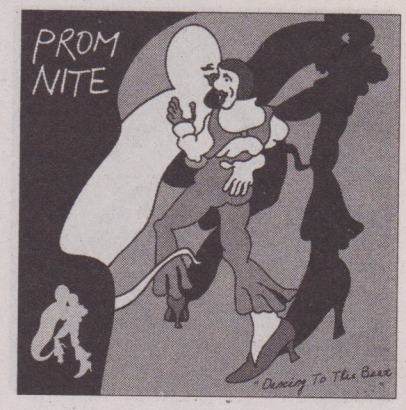
BLEEDING GUMS – "II" EP (Neck Chop)
Everything I like about rock music is in these grooves.

MOZART – "Nasty" EP (Iron Lung)
This record is a litmus test of whether I trust your taste in, or definition of, hardcore. They exist in the same headspace for me as JUMP OFF A BUILDING.

CAREER SUICIDE – "Machine Response" LP (Deranged / Static Shock)
Almost no bands even come close to touching their former glory sixteen







years into their existence, but *Machine Response* is rivaled only by *Sars* in the CAREER SUICIDE canon. It's as raging as the aforementioned, and a considerably well-written and cohesive LP for a band who I've always felt were at their best on 7".

EXIT ORDER – "Seed Of Hysteria" LP (Side Two / La Vida Es Un Mus)
While this record does not have a song as good as "Begging"—which is one of the top ten punk songs of this decade—this band has one of the best hardcore sounds right now,. *Please* fucking tour out west.

FYPM – "Dumbed Down" LP (Tankcrimes)
It's been a very long time since a straightforward ranting-and-raving-about-society hardcore band has made me feel anything, but *goddamn*, Erba and co. deliver. I don't expect cool guys to flock to this band (their loss), but this record is at least as good as anything GORDON SOLIE MOTHERFUCKERS did.

ÖTZI – "Ghosts" LP (LastHour / Near Dark)
A touching tribute to those lost in the Ghost Ship fire.

TOP FIVE LIVE:
FRAMTID / MACHO BOYS / MR. AIRPLANE MAN / BEATNIKS

FELIX HAVOC

Felix Havoc runs Havoc Records and is a long-running columnist at MRR.

2017 was a good year for raw punk. I didn't hear many records outside this genre that I found captivating, and not for a lack of trying.

EXIT ORDER – "Seed of Hysteria" LP (Side Two / La Vida Es Un Mus)
My favorite record of the year, everything I was looking for in a hardcore punk band in 2017. Powerful and catchy riffs, lots of energy. A very good mix of '80s sounds and contemporary hardcore.

KATASTROF – "Falksa Leenden" EP (Beach Impediment)
Best 7" of 2017 in my book. This is basically the same line-up as INSTITUTION but without Jallo. This band features members of the aforementioned INSTITUTION, HERÄTYS, INFERNOH and of course TOTALITÄR. This style of hardcore is really out of style right now, but it's still top ranked for me. As I note about CAREER SUICIDE below, it's very reassuring to me that there are lifers playing this music in an era when a record sells 300 copies instead of 3000. The quality is still the same, and the feeling is there.

CAREER SUICIDE – "Machine Response" LP (Deranged / Static Shock)
Yes, CAREER SUICIDE has a new LP, ten years after the last LP, and five years since the *Cherry Beach EP*. They are not blazing any new trails or branching out, thankfully. This is just pure fast snotty hardcore like you would expect from CAREER SUICIDE. This was a refreshing record to listen to over and over again. Other genres of music are in the fore now. That said, some genres still sound great to me even when they are out of style. I think it's great to hear true believers staying true to their school and delivering the goods.

STRUL – "Lennart Och Asen" LP (Ken Rock)
As far as I can tell, these guys aren't members or side projectors of anything (which is unusual for a small scene like Sweden). Fast hardcore punk, really angry and snotty with some blazing rock leads. It's a good mix of raw Swedish hardcore with meat and potatoes American Hardcore. This record has an energy and rage that really leaps off the vinyl, like they "mean it man."

SUBVERSIVE RITE – "The Demos" 12" (Bloody Master)
As is often the case, here we have demos making the jump to vinyl. Although these demos are better than most "real" recordings by

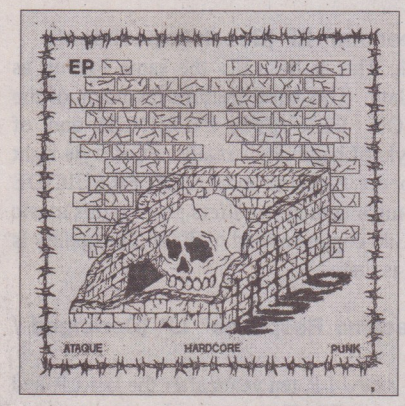
hardcore bands I heard this year. A good mix of mid '80s UK proto-crust and Scandinavian hardcore sounds. Reminds me a lot of demo-era SACRILEGE.

URCHIN – "Peace Sign" EP (Roachleg)
Just raw and blasting raw punk in the early ANTI-CIMEX / SHITLICKERS tradition.

PARANOID – "Praise No Deity" EP (Konton Krasher / The Sign)
Another banger from Paranoid, blown out Swedish / Japanese hardcore, this band is always performing at the highest level. They also released an uproarious LP of covers in 2017 that is worth tracking down.

GLORIOUS? – "Neverending Butchery" EP (Brain Solvent Propaganda)
This is apparently a one person project from Malmo, Sweden. For one person D-beat Projects I'm putting it in the top tier along with HEAVY NUKES. Very convincing and true to form *Why*-era DISCHARGE-style hardcore.

SVAVELDIOXID – "Krigets Brutalitat" EP (Phobia)
This Stockholm band plays heavy, raw, dirty, driving D-beat hardcore. They also released an excellent split with MANIA FOR CONQUEST this year.



VÄGRA – "Refuse" EP (Brain Solvent Propaganda)
Members of ECTOPLASM and PROCESS fuse to drop more of this intense D-beat rage. Has the same kind of *Why*-era drive and power as GLORIOUS?

RUNNERS-UP:
CONCEALED BLADE – LP (Beach Impediment) / SOCIETY'S DECLINE – "Toxic Waste" EP (Dark Elk / Kibou / Mangel Wax / Mundo En Kaos / Phobia).

METTE HELMS

Mette Helms is a part of the K-Town Hardcore Fest organizing collective in Copenhagen and is a columnist for MRR.

2017 was a fun year. Here are my ten favorite releases of this year sorted alphabetically, because I don't believe in hierarchies, or because I couldn't possibly choose between these treasures. You decide.

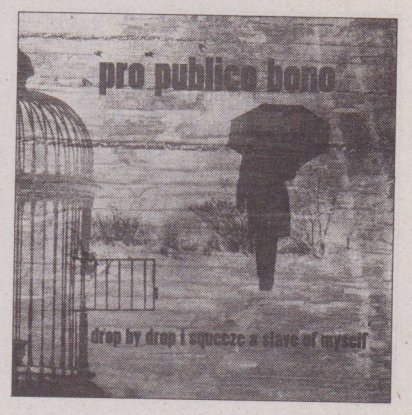
BIG MESS – "Kill 'Em All / The Winner Takes It All" (Elektriske Plader / Indisciplinarian)
Local pop punk darlings showing off their character with this two song 7". The A-side is a typical uptempo pop punk anthem while the B-side is a ballad cover of ABBA's "The Winner Takes It All." BIG MESS is the kind of band that punks either love or hate. No matter what, no one can resist bopping their heads to their energetic pop-punk songs.

EXIT ORDER – "Seed of Hysteria" LP (Side Two / La Vida Es Un Mus)
EXIT ORDER seems to mix every hardcore punk genre into one on this much anticipated record. It's a collection of banger after banger, and this record could easily be played song after song, back to back, with no breaks inbetween, equal to a good hardcore punk set. No matter what, EXIT ORDER's real strength lies in the mix of genres, tempos and styles in their creeping flanger filled pieces. Perfect for dance routines in the living room, perfect for mosh pits at sweaty, stinky punk venues.

KURRAKÄ – "Otra Dimensión" CS (Oscuridad En Mi Vida)
Noisy raw punk performed in a dark gloomy style. If post-raw punk is a genre, KURRAKÄ is at the forefront of it. This is the follow up to their 2014 LP, which still blows me away every time I listen to it, and which is a way underrated record. For me, this cassette takes off where the last record ended. Clearly KURRAKÄ has evolved their style, as a band should, and this release brings a more heavily spine-chilling vibe, while not swaying away from the signature echo-submerged vocals.

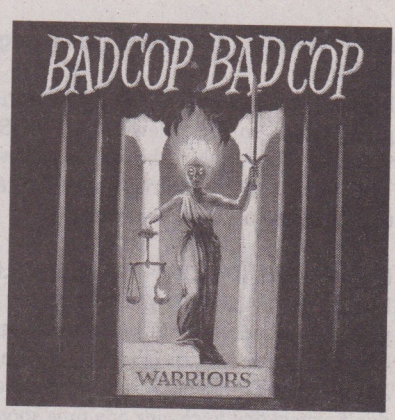
JUNTA – "Vertigem" EP (Junta Tapes)
This is far from the first release by Copenhagen raw punks JUNTA, who have kept it as a tradition to release a cassette or EP once or twice a year. In terms of recordings, this is the most active Copenhagen band around at the moment, and they keep it DIY to the bone by recording and releasing everything themselves. JUNTA has grown a lot since their debut show a few years ago, and their style of raw peace / war punk is pretty damn solid by now. Their approach to punk is sinister, with vocals that sound like an evil killer machine, backed up by rocking riffs and a solid rhythm group to keep it all together.

LUX – LP (Discos Enfermos)
I've been hooked on LUX since their 2016 demo, and this record is a follow-up that steps it up a notch or ten. The guitar has an unique flanger tone coming at you like an airplane, which means that the bass has the space to embrace the melodic parts of the songs. The drum beat is a mix between a traditional pogo-punk beat and the "2010s Barcelona" beat. LUX experiments with and pushes the boundaries of punk and shows that punk can be developed and expanded within itself, without ever having the need to leave the genre.



MURO – "Ataque Hardcore Punk" 12" (Byllepest)
MURO is a reinvention of '80s chaotic hardcore punk, performed with the same aggressiveness but with a cleaner sound. I love the chaotic '80s, but there's no point in performing hardcore punk in this style exactly as it was created 35 years ago. This isn't 1982, and therefore MURO's transformation is relevant for how hardcore punk should deal with its fascination with the past. MURO has their own take on hardcore punk while keeping the basics of the genre with sloppy guitar solos, fast rhythms, a dynamic song structure and political lyrics from the perspective of the underdog.

ODIO – "Ancora" LP (Agipunk)
ODIO has the power to blast out any eardrum, but the band is so much more than just another aggressive noisy band, and they are not hiding their talent. Their biggest asset is the amazing song structure they've designed. ODIO is way more advanced than the bands they were undeniably inspired by. This LP has eight songs of aggressive hardcore with a pogo beat, reinforced by guitar solos and mid-song breaks and a nice surprise of darker songs on the B-side. Like their 2016 7", the sound production is incredible. ODIO is a complex band due to their song structures, but they absolutely nail it.



PAWNS – "The Gallows" LP (Mass Media)
Ah yes, here's some "dark punk"; a term that means nothing because it's only used to classify bands that won't fit in neither the punk nor the goth category. PAWNS sounds like '80s UK anarcho-punk, set in a horror movie in black and white. The record cover displays that clearly this is a political record, much in the spirit of their anarcho-punk influences. The record is ten powerful tracks, that exhibit a strong drum beat and clean bass lines with creeping guitar and vocal sounds. I see PAWNS categorized along the more electronic sounding new post-punk bands, who've created slow tempo songs that are good for nothing but lullabies. PAWNS stands out from the crowd by having a fast pace in the punk tradition and using rhythm as a chilling build up, possibly influenced by the masters of old horror movies.

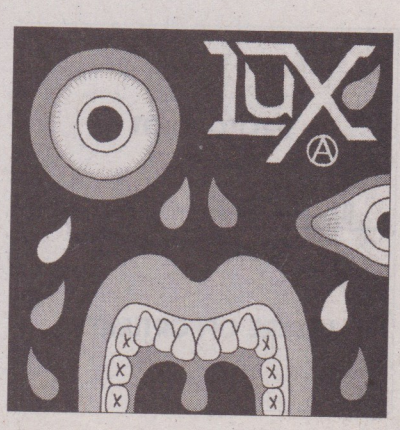
RATA NEGRA – "Oído Absoluto" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
This is a solid record of dark melodic punk rock. When I heard the opening track "Ratas", I instantly knew I was gonna love this record. The buzzing melodies are backed up by a steady danceable beat, but the vocals are what really glues it all together. There is a certain desperation or heartache in the vocals, yet they are warm and welcoming. This is my new go-to record for punk rock hits.

WRETCHED – "Libero E Selvaggio" 4xEP boxset (Agipunk / Chaos Produzioni)
Go on Discogs and you'll see someone trying to sell an original WRETCHED 7" record *sleeve* (yes, just the sleeve) for $59.99. Anything by WRETCHED has been pretty much impossible to get your hands on if you don't have a big fat wallet or a big pot of luck until re-issues started popping up a few years ago. This compilation boxset is by far the nicest of the re-releases. Everything is high quality, including the remastered songs delivered on colored vinyl with a thick booklet. There's also quite a musical journey from the early WRETCHED / INDIGESTI split EP, which is definitely *chaos non musica*, to the late 2-song *In ControLuce* EP. This is definitely a collector's item that spends more time displayed on my shelf than on my record player, yet it still comes with a reasonable price tag. WRETCHED is an essential punk band, and this release certainly lives up to that status.

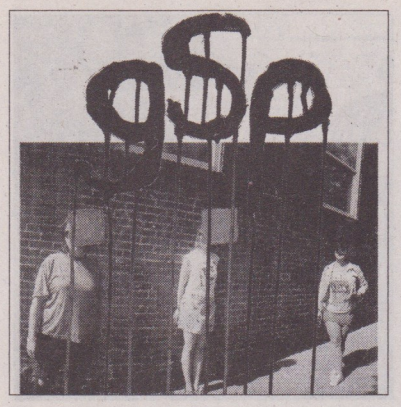
RYAN HERTEL

Ryan Hertel is a paranoid hypochondriac who is thoroughly convinced that every record he reviews will be the last thing he ever hears before the ultra cancer gets him...and is a reviewer for MRR.

2017 was bad in a lot of ways, but I'm happy that at least there was plenty of good music, including the 10 things below, to help keep me from shutting down. Can we all promise to do our parts to make 2018 better?



PRO PUBLICO BONO – "Drop By Drop I Squeeze A Slave of Myself" LP (Pasazer)
This group of Polish peace punks in the UK making CHUMBAWAMBA-style punk was my favorite new discovery this year. I already have a soft spot for dual vocals, so that sold me right away. What kept



me around was the raw energy you can feel coming off of each track that feels like I'm at their show.

LIMP WRIST – "Facades" LP (Lengua Armada / La Vida Es Un Mus)
It's always nice to get a new little surprise after absence let the heart grow fonder, so some new LIMP WRIST after nine years was very welcome. The A-side is the queer hardcore that I expected and wanted. The B-side is the industrial-tinged dance party that I certainly didn't expect and didn't know I wanted.

BAD COP/BAD COP – "Warriors" LP (Fat Wreck)
I got to see BAD COP/BAD COP open for three different shows this year, and I cannot wait to see them start to close those shows. On their current trajectory, I expect to see a lot more of them. *Warriors* has been a collection of motivation anthems for me for the last six months, and I don't expect that to change any time soon.

JEFF ROSENSTOCK / SKA SUCKS – split EP (World Domination)
I'm glad to see SKA SUCKS getting some attention outside of Korea, and I hope this is the beginning of their complete leakage into the US. This is the caliber of music you get when you spend your life only wanting to do one thing, and, in this case, the members of SKA SUCKS only wanted to bring real intense ska to South Korea. They succeeded and built a really cool scene along the way. Jeff Rosenstock also brings his typical "most fun dude at the party" energy to his side. Seeing SKA SUCKS at Hemlock Tavern was also a standout moment for me in 2017.

HOMELESS GOSPEL CHOIR – "Presents: Normal" (A-F)
With a few albums under his belt, HOMELESS GOSPEL CHOIR has returned, louder and fuller. His backing band sounds bigger. His thoughts and dreams sound bigger. Everything about this release is bigger. "Normal" is my singing in the shower loud enough for the neighbors to hear #1 track of 2017. This whole album makes me happy overall.

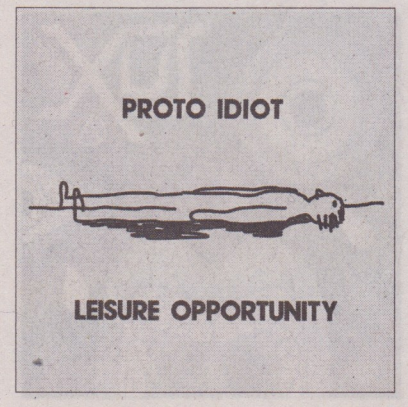
WESTERN ADDICTION – "Tremulous" LP (Fat Wreck)
This may be the best-produced hardcore album of 2017, so, if that turns you off, skip this one. It's tight without a single hair out of place. Like a well-made ceramic pot, it's nice to see what people can create when they spend years making something exactly how they want it, which is why it's excusable that the band took twelve years to come back with this album.

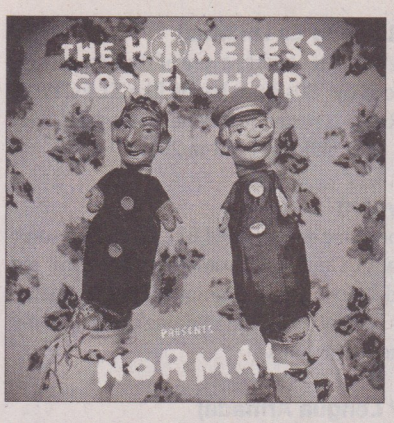
HIRS COLLECTIVE – "How To Stop Street Harassment" EP (Get Better)
This is ten more grind tracks from the HIRS COLLECTIVE that unfortunately seem timeless. I say "unfortunately," because there's still a need to scream and shout about trans issues and street harassment. Fortunately, there are releases like this that show how to not be silent and keep fighting. This is 6 minutes of sonic energy that I have repeated over and over and will continue to for a while.

TANKINI – "Do U Suk" CS (Get Better)
These five songs are expert pop punk, and I want more of it. It's not that shocking how good it is when you realize that the musical experience of PEEPLE WATCHIN' and G.L.O.S.S. is behind this band as well. All I want for Chrimas is more of this in 2018.

FRENZAL RHOMB – "Hi-Vis High Tea" LP (Fat Wreck)
FRENZAL RHOMB are consistently a perfect blend goofy and serious and hopeful and somber and other mixtures of those and similar emotions and have been for over 20 years. I spent three years living in Japan, and the one thing every Australian and I could relate on was how badass this band is. After a few years of silence aside from a greatest hits album, it's great to see them back at it and as good as ever.

ENDON – "Through The Mirror" LP (Daymare / Hydra Head)
I suspect that America is going to start seeing a lot more of this Japanese group, especially if they take after their frequent tour mates, BORIS, and their never ending world tour. ENDON is a chaotic and violent punk grindcore metal noise cloud that is best experienced live, but somehow,





this album almost manages to capture the experience. It's the exact opposite of a sensory deprivation chamber except completely enjoyable.

CAROLYN KEDDY

Carolyn Keddy is the film columnist for MRR.

Here are my favorite records of 2017. Listen to them and you will know why. Here's to 2018!

Albums:
YVONNE AND THE NO REGRETS – "Nothing Compares To You" CS (S/R)
FEEDTIME – "Gas" LP (In The Red)
CHROME REVERSE – "They Wanna Fight!" LP (Mag Wheels)
HEAVY METAL – "LP2" LP (Static Age)
MARY BELL – "Mary Bell" LP (Danger)
MARK CONE – "Now Showing" LP (Neck Chop)
PROTO IDIOT – "Leisure Opportunity" LP (Slovenly)
TAIWAN HOUSING PROJECT – "Veblen Death Mask" LP (Kill Rock Stars)
GSP – 12" (Thrilling Living)
DAVID NANCE – "Do The Negative Boogie" LP (Ba-Da-Bing!)

EPs:
JAMES ARTHUR'S MANHUNT – "Staring At The Sun / Cherry Red" (Spacecase)
CTMF featuring The Dear Watson Sound – "Billy Childish 45 Club" 4xEPs (Damaged Goods)
NOTS – "Cruel Friend / Violence" (Goner)
LEMONADE – "Pink" EP (Not Normal / Thrilling Living)
MOMMY LONG LEGS – "Rock Product" EP (Youth Riot)
MOZART – "Nasty" EP (Iron Lung)
CELEBRITY HANDSHAKE – "Also Starring Celebrity Handshake as Celebrity Handshake" EP (Eastern Prawn)
ZERODENT – "Soul Mender" EP (Almost Ready)
SEX CRIME – "Song That You Love" EP (No Front Teeth)
JOHNNY MOPED – "Catatonic / Hard Lovin' Man" (Damaged Goods)

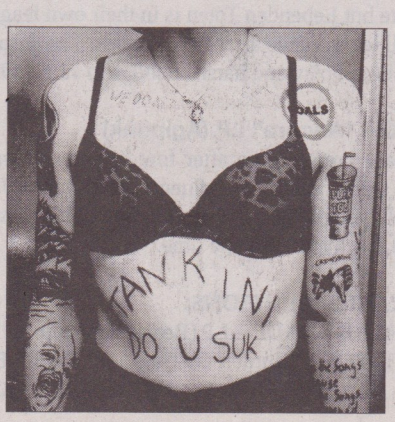
Reissues:
SITES N' SOUNDS – "The Night Is So Dark / T" (Black Gladiator)
NEON – "Neon / Nazi Schatzi" (Water Wing)
HUSKER DU – "Savage Young Du" LP box set (Numero Group)
SLIME – "Controversial / Loony" EP (Damaged Goods)
CHEATER SLICKS – "Destination Lonely" LP (Almost Ready)
DANNY BURK & THE INVADERS – "Ain't Going Nowhere / Til I'm Sure" (Certified PR)
CARSICKNESS – "1979–1982" LP (Get Hip)
DEBILS – LP (Static Age)
BAD DADDIES – "Over 30 Singles" LP (Emotional Response)
FOOD & MONEY – "1979–1982" LP (Alona's Dream)

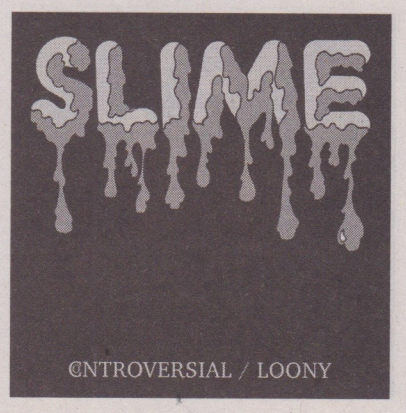
Live:
FEEDTIME / DAVID NANCE BAND / MY NAME IS JOE / PHANTOM SURFERS / DERV GORDON / NOTS / GSP / MANE

ROBERT MATUSIAK

Robert Matusiak runs Refuse Records.

I feel like 2017 was much better than 2016 and punk and hardcore releases. I had *way* more choices for my potential top ten releases, which feels great. I don't feel as great about the state of the world, and I'd like to believe that this is what makes people more active, creative and aware. No matter where truth is—please keep doing your music, art, or protests in 2018. Watch out for each other and never stop. The following are my top ten releases in order.





1. EXIT ORDER – "Seed Of Hysteria" LP (Side Two / La Vida Es Un Mus)
Within the first 30 seconds and the first 2 riffs and I already knew that it would be one of the best release of this year. Perfect uptempo energetic hardcore punk influenced by '80s Euro bands like ELECTRIC DEADS, KALASHNIKOV, ABADDON plus the No Future Records roster, just done many years later and on the other side of the big water. This is sounds so fresh, vital and powerful in 2017!

2. PRIESTS – "Nothing Feels Natural" LP (Sister Polygon)
New vinyl release from this DC band and it's definitely their best one so far. I feel like there's no sonic limits for this band. They can use whatever influence they want to and make something beautiful out of it. Smart people who know well how to make their sound innovative and unique. Having such a powerful and talented singer on the front makes this band very special too. I can imagine them not only participating but also playing at the next protests outside of the *White* house.

3. LIMP WRIST – "Facades" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus / Lengua Armada)
Everybody's favorite half-naked raging queer hardcore outfit is back with the new release, How important is this voice, especially now! They express so clearly the frustration about our political reality; how we thought we would progress, but actually went in a worse direction. The great informative booklet is something I can really appreciate. The tracks on Side B of the record is definitely brave move. I'm more than sure that my neighbor and his gay friends who like to party hard until morning would love to hear it through my walls.

4. AGGRESSION PACT – "Instant Execution" EP (Painkiller)
Recently I've been missing that old good straight-up '80s USHC sound done well by current bands. This is what that style sounds like when it is done well. Comparisons to NOTA or CIA are on point. This is my fave 7" of the year.

5. PROTESTER – "Hide From Reality" LP (Trash King)
DC hardcore recorded in Boston with Clevo and NY influences but this time slightly different than their early releases. Adding some influence from POISON IDEA gives this band some more character and makes their sound more complex. Great!

6. COKE BUST / DESPISE YOU – split EP (Bones Brigade / To Live A Lie)
DC vs. L.A. split release with ultra-fast raging hardcore and powerviolence. It took a while for this split to come out, but I am so glad that it is finally available. New 12" from COKE BUST someday soon please!

7. KOHTI TUHOA – "Pelon Neljäs Valtakunta" LP (Southern Lord / Svart)
I can't really understand why Finnish Hardcore punk seems overlooked in Europe. It's so ignorant and unfair. In theory, the mix of Finnish and Japanese hardcore would sound incredible and KOHTI TUHOA managed to make this dream real.

8. CAREER SUICIDE – "Machine Response" LP (Deranged / Static Shock)
This release was physically out in 2016 but it was just after deadline of the *MRR* Top Ten for last year so this piece of vinyl should not be forgotten. One of the very best bands in recent years. Their new release is still fast and snotty and there is more leads and structure in their songs. I'm really happy to see this band still keep going!

9. LEBENDEN TOTEN – "Mind Parasites" LP (Overthrow / self-released)
I wasn't sure if this band is really still around. I was surprised when they released three new releases including this full length. Several bands have recently tried to follow the CONFUSE / DISORDER noise punk route but Lebenden Toten is in their own league. Their sound is brutal and if you're not ready for this you'll leave venue after two seconds. The desperate voice of Chanel is a perfect combination here with this ultra noisy and harsh sound. I'm so glad I had a chance to see them few times this year.

10. ODIO – "Ancora" LP (Agipunk)
This release grew on me after few listens and watching their shows several times this year. There might be some Italian HC influence here but the Japanese influence is so obvious. Anyway, it's done really well, very uptempo, very rhythmic. There's something twisted about how it's articulated but also somehow catchy at the same time.

HONORABLE MENTIONS:
CONCEALED BLADE – LP (Beach Impediment) / PMS 84 – "Easy Way Out" LP (Discos Enfermos) / CIVIC DUTY – "Burden Of Hate" EP (Triple B) / ULTRA – "Mística Moderna" EP (La Vida Es Un Mus) / RAPTURE – "I Glorify" EP (Quality Control) / FREEDOM – "Never Had A Choice" EP

(Triple B) / NIGHT FORCE – "Paranoia" EP (Quality Control) / INSIST – "Here & Now" EP (React!) / MACHO BOYS – LP (Neck Chop) / XYLITOL "Is Toxic To Pigs?" EP (Thrilling Living / Total Negativity)

WARSAW'S BEST:
JAD – demo CS (self-released), NEGATIVE VIBES – EP (DIY Koło / Melina / N.I.C.)

BERLIN'S BEST:
PIG//CONTROL – "Vor Den Mauern" 12" (Sabotage), PRIMITIVE LIFE – "Man Made Disaster" EP (Backbite / Inge's Revenge / Refuse), ES WAR MORD – "Unter Kannibalen" LP (Sounds Of Subterrania), GULAG BEACH – "Apocalyptic Beats" LP (Phantom)

RECOMMENDED '80S POLISH PUNK / HC REISSUES:
DEUTER – "Demos 1981-1984" LP (Warsaw Pact), MOSKWA – "Wiem" EP (Warsaw Pact), ABADDON – "Jarocin' 83" 12" (Lou & Rocked Boys), DZIECI KAPITANA KLOSSA – "Syf Bałtycki" LP (Pasażer), KARA ŚMIERCI – "Demo 89" (N.I.C.).

MATEUS MONDINI

Mateus Mondini lives in São Paulo and *runs Nada Nada Discos.*

I spent almost the whole year listening to twenty shitty tapes, recorded live at an outdoors punk festival in São Paulo, 1982, so then I could choose the best tracks for an extra LP from a reissue I did. My head and ears almost exploded with all that great audio quality, but here is the other things I listened to this year, besides these twenty shitty tapes...

MAGIN – "Portal EP 01" Digital (self-released)
From the Brazilian South, MAGIN is Aline's punk band, who is one of the heads behind this avant garde label called Meia Vida. They put out many projects including Aline's FLORES FEIAS and ANTILINE. Magin is just pure punk, just makes you wanna beat your head against the wall.

V/A – "Sudamerica Existe" CS (Sudamerica Existe)
A great research work about South American early punk with woman participation. Some of my old favs, like 3D (Brazil) and FÉRTIL MISERIA (Colombia) and also amazing bands I've never heard before, like PSH PSH (Venezuela) and POLUCIÓN SONORA (Uruguay). Most of these bands had just released tapes and songs on comps, so I'm glad they were put it all together and showed to the world.

SLENDER – "Walled Garden" EP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
I both hate and love to say it, but this is genius. Weird DIY music, songs that keep in your head for days.

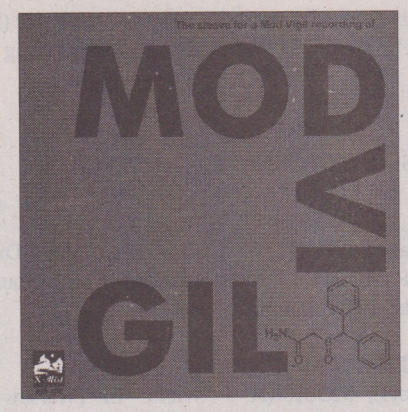
CRUSADER DE DEUS – "Clássicos Republicanos" CS (Dama da Noite)
When I first heard CRUSADER DE DEUS in 2015, they became my favorite Brazilian band having members I never met before. It's a kind of post-punk sound that can only be made in Rio de Janeiro, the same way, but totally different, Black Future did. Two years later they put out this great tape and it looks the band don't exist anymore.

RITUAL VEIL – "Wolf In The Night" CS (Cosmonaut)
In 2006 my friend Colin came to Brazil and gave me a bunch of Portland punk records, like PRF and NO HEROES, both Wolfgang Williams bands. RITUAL VEIL is Wolfgang's synth-pop band. It's perfect to dance, which is what you can expect from a synth-pop band, but having guitars played by a punk makes everything way cooler.

LIMP WRIST – "Facades" LP (Lengua Armada)
Eight perfect hardcore songs on the A-side, and the greatest surprise you can have on the B-side.

JULIANA R – "Tarefas Intermináveis" Digital (A Onda Errada)
A girl, a drum machine, a keyboard and maybe something else. The first time I listened to it I thought it was a more minimal, robotic and cold YOUNG MARBLE GIANTS. But then I put Colossal Youth to play and it's definitely not. Perfect soundtrack for a hangover Sunday afternoon.

RAKTA – "At KEXP" CS (Iron Lung)
I'm glad Nada Nada didn't release this RAKTA tape, so I don't feel guilty to put my favorite band in my Top 10. The band at its peak, playing live on a radio station. The best "Peel Session" of my generation.



MURO – "Ataque Hardcore Punk" 12" (Byllepest)
Early this year I went to Bogota for the first time and fell in love with Rat Trap collective and everything around them. It's the most productive and inspiring punk scene I've ever seen. So many good bands and good people working together for an ideal, punk. MURO is a result of everything Rat Trap has been doing and *Ataque Hardcore Punk* has everything a great punk record should have.

LEBENDEN TOTEN– "Mind Parasites" LP (Overthrow / self-released)
Simply the best.

NECK CHOP

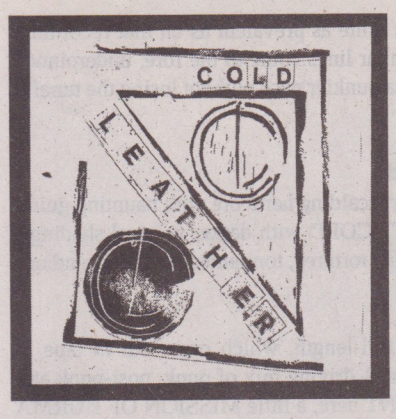
Neck Chop records is a label and distro operating out of Fullerton, California.

I'm torn on 2017. I had so many positives personally this past year with bringing a dog into our family, having a full year in the books for Neck Chop Records and making a bunch of new friends through all of this. However having all of that contrasted with the state of our country politically along with the terrible tragedies all year really makes it hard to think of 2017 as a good year. Luckily there was a ton of good music to distract us all. I'm sure I missed some stuff. I stayed away from any / all releases that were Neck Chop related (bands or side projects) since it's obvious I love those releases and people whether on my label or another label. Here you go, in no particular order for each category:

12":
PLAYBOY – "Celebration" 12" (Negative Jazz)
KALEIDOSCOPE – "Volume 3" 12" (Feel It)
GLUE – LP (Glue / La Vida Es Un Mus)
THE COWBOY – "The Cowboy Album" LP (Drunken Sailor / Fashionable Idiots)
GSP – 12" (Thrilling Living)
AMERICAN HATE – "Our Love Is Real" LP (Not Normal)
FNU CLONE INC. – "Binary Or Die" LP (Total Punk)
HARAM – "When You Have Won, You Have Lost" LP (Toxic State / La Vida Es Un Mus)
AQUARIAN BLOOD – "Last Nite In Paradise" LP (Goner)
RATA NEGRA – "Oído Absoluto" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
FEEDTIME – "Gas" LP (In The Red)
DAVID NANCE – "Do The Negative Boogie" LP (Ba Da Bing!)

7":
MOZART – "Nasty" EP (Iron Lung)
TARANTÜLA – EP (Lengua Armada)
MUTUAL JERK – "He's Harmless" EP (State Laughter)
TROPICAL TRASH – "Decisions' Empty Nest" EP (Sophomore Lounge)
GEN POP – "On The Screen" EP (Lumpy)
SEX DRIVE – "Hate Home" EP (Sexy Romance)
THE CAVEMEN – "Band In BC" EP (Weirdly)
GG KING – "Another Dimension" EP (Scavenger of Death)
NURSE – "Foreign Object" EP (Scavenger of Death)
LEMONADE – "Pink" EP (Not Normal / Thrilling Living)
BUCK BILOXI – "Hollow Earth" EP (Holotrash)
MICK TROUBLE – "It's The Mick Trouble EP" EP (Emotional Response)

REISSUES:
HOUSEWIVES – LP (ever/never)
PERFORMING FERRET BAND – all (Discos Alehop / Beat Generation / Insolito)
DINOSAURS – LP (ReRun)
MODERN WARFARE – "Complete Recordings" LP (ReRun)
AUTISTICS – "Turn Up The Hits" LP (Puke N Vomit)
LOWLIFE – "Leaders" EP (HoZac)
SOLID SPACE – "Space Museum" LP (Dark Entries)



NURSE – "Discography 1983-1984" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
DESPERATE BICYCLES – "Singles" LP (FanClub)
THE DOGS – "Rehearsals 1974" LP (Mémoire Neuve)
VIETNAM – LP (BFE)

BEN PAULSEN

Ben Paulsen is a record reviewer for MRR *and runs Commodity Tapes.*

PURA MANIA – "Cerebros Punk" LP (CV / Hysteria)
FLESH WORLD – "Into The Shroud" LP (Dark Entries)
PIÑÉN – "Vida" EP (Hurricane / self-released)
ANTI-SEX – "Un Mejor Futuro" (Cintas Pepe / Thrilling Living / World Gone Mad)
AUSENCIA / NARCOESTADO – split EP (Todo Destruido)
HARAM – "When You Have Won, You Have Lost" LP (Toxic State / La Vida Es Un Mus)
MURO – "Ataque Hardcore Punk" 12" (Byllepest)
COLD LEATHER – "Past Remedy" EP (Sabotage)
SIAL – "Demo" EP (Lost in Fog)
POBREZA MENTAL – demo CS (self-released)

AL QUINT

Al Quint is a long-running columnist at MRR, *runs the* Suburban Voice *blog, and serves as host of the* Sonic Overload *radio show.*

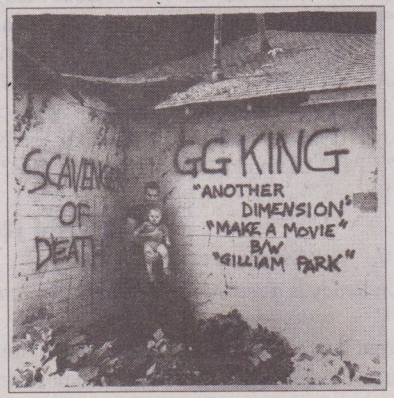
DIY punk in Boston is at its lowest point in recent years. Sure, there are some shows at clubs with stage barricades and bouncers and high prices. There's still the Democracy Center, the one steady DIY punk venue that's still left, and they do a great job. The Cambridge Elks is also steady, although it's expensive to rent out and doesn't exactly have the same charm as a basement show. People are moving to NYC, Philly and Olympia, among other places and there are many bands who are skipping the area. I only went to one basement show all year which was about three minutes from my house here in Peabody, in a vacant building owned by the dad of Gary from BOMBERS, GSG and others. They're calling it Harsh House and hope to do more shows. I love the shorter drive, although it's tough for others, of course. That was one of my favorite shows this year—DAME, BOMBERS, VIDEO FILTH and GSG—not only because the bands were all good but it had a feel that I've been missing since the demise of the Boiler Room and Non-Factory. Other great live bands I saw were MACHO BOYS, XYLITOL, DAUÐYFLIN, the PIST, INSTITUTE, NOTS, RIXE, NEGATIVE APPROACH, UNA BÈSTIA INCONTROLABLE and HEZ.

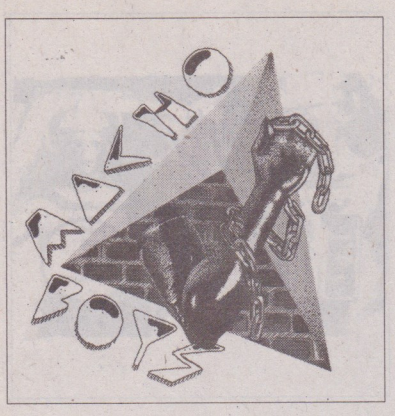
Enough whining...here are ten of my favorite recordings this year...

1. MOD VIGIL – LP (X-Mist)
The record jacket is a tribute to GANG OF FOUR's first EP. So it's not a major surprise that there's an angular, post-punk pulse but this is hardly a derivative tribute. The nervy jab is hitched to a full-bore punk attack. Distorted, nasally vocals and songs that build themselves into a whirlwind frenzy, especially album closer "Trout Casualty." The stop / start "Rare Au Pair" slows it to a moodier clip. And the trebly production by Mikey Young (EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING and others) gives it a restless edginess. An incredible debut.

2. INSTITUTE – "Subordination" LP (Sacred Bones)
INSTITUTE's second album adopts a pronounced fuzzed-out guitar tone and has the band leaning in more of a rock direction on some tracks, but it's not a major departure. There's still an early goth / post-punk undertow. Some knockout songs, starting with the punky rush of "Exhibitionism." You won't be able to get the guitar line for "Only Child" out of your ears, with its CRISIS echo. The butcher-block bass lines for "Oil Money" are a perfect accompaniment for the noisy guitar swirl. Mose Brown's against-the-grain sing / speak vocals wrap around the music in an off-kilter intonation. Evolving without losing its core grittiness.

3. DAME – "Glitch" EP (Charm School)
Melodic, yet stinging '80s-inspired goth-punk by these five ladies from





Boston and a big jump from their demo. Lauren's synth isn't quite as prevalent as on that recording, creating more of an atmospheric effect. Anna's mellifluent guitar lines come to the fore, underpinned by solid bass lines and drumming. "Hush" speeds things up to a punkier pace without losing the tuneful glow.

4. NURSE – "Foreign Object" EP (Scavenger Of Death)
NURSE's second self-titled 7" is as intense as their first. Nasty, scalding hardcore with haunting guitar textures to go with the onslaught. These guys sound like OUT COLD with darker musical shadings, especially on opening song "Foreign Objects." The lyrics reveal a tortured, tormented soul. Ear-rending.

5. LA VASE – CS (self-released)
This German band kicks up a fucking storm on their first full-length, which came out in tape in November but should be out on vinyl by the time you see this. A driving mix of punk, post-punk and garage packed full of hooks and burn. A little EDDY CURRENT here, a little MISSION OF BURMA there but with an amped-up, caffeinated intensity.

6. MACHO BOYS – LP (Neck Chop)
Timeless hardcore punk, both in the band's direct, rough and tumble '80s-inspired sound and pointed lyrics. Mixing thrash with a classic SoCal punk inspiration *à la* ADOLESCENTS and AGRESSION, with a driving backbeat. "Stone Cold," with its wrasslin' theme, definitely falls into that realm. And being a Bostonian, I applaud their pounding cover of DECADENCE's "Slam" from *This Is Boston, Not LA*. I mentioned the timeless lyrical themes and that's rather a pity since the same shit that angered punks back then is still around. And this type of music remains is still a good way to cope.

7. TARANTÜLA – "I Live Free" EP (Lengua Armada)
TARANTÜLA is the new band with three former members of CÜLO and, this time, they've brought in a bass player. After a couple of kickass demos, their vinyl debut provides no let-down. The sound is fuller and more tuneful in spots ("Dawning" in particular), along with some darker shadings and there's plenty of punk kick. In other words, this isn't really CÜLO Part II but trying something a bit different. The lyrics exhibit some serious demon-wrestling and you have to respect their candor.

8. THE COWBOY – "The Cowboy Album" LP (Drunken Sailor / Fashionable Idiots)
Steve Peffer and Drew Banaszak from HOMOSTUPIDS comprise 2/3 of this band and, as you might guess, they rely on a volume-drenched attack although it's not nearly as blown-out sounding as their former unit. An engaging, nervy amalgam of old Clevo scuzz punk, garage and post-punk. Big, cascading, swirling riffs come through to envelope the senses but there's also nuance, hooks, and a strong rhythmic punch.

9. VANILLA POPPERS – LP (Lumpy)
No-nonsense, ass-kicking punk / garage / rock'n'roll. Many of the lyrical themes deal with the dynamics of human interaction i.e. people can really suck, sexism, and so on. A straight-forward, fuzzy, three chord attack, along with Christina's pissed-off sounding vocals. Nothing complex, just loud and burning in its most basic form. Why fuck with what works?

10. ELIX-R – "6 hrs" CS (Pharm House)
Raw and abrasive punk from this Denton, TX band, with yelping vocals buried into a din of buzz-burn instrumentation. There's a RUDIMENTARY PENI feel, with the thumping repetitiveness. The guitar tone for closing track "Higher" has a bit of a death rock feel. In glorious low fidelity.

HONORABLE MENTIONS:
BLANK SPELL – "Miasma" LP (World Gone Mad) / CONFIRMATION – "++++" CS (Hidden Fortune) / EEL – "Night Parade Of 100 Demons" LP (Beach Impediment) / EXOTICA – "Musique Exotique #02" 12" (La Vida Es Un Mus) / GSP – 12" (Thrilling Living) / GLUE – LP (Glue / La Vida Es Un Mus) / HARAM – "When You Have Won, You Have Lost" LP (Toxic State / La Vida Es Un Mus) / OWNER – demo CS (self-released) / RUT – "Attraction" EP (Digital Regress) / SUBURBAN HOMES – "Unemployed / Anxiety Attack" (Total Punk) / UBIK – demo CS (Symphony of Destruction) / XYLITOL – "Demo" EP (25 Diamonds) and "Is Toxic to Pigs??" EP (Thrilling Living / Total Negativity)

ROTTEN RON READY

Rotten Ron Ready is a record reviewer at MRR, *and a truly* rotten *human being.*

Writing from behind the walls of a corrupt empire known as the USA, it's pretty hard to think of my favorite music in the ancient protest genre known as "punk" released in Year One of a possibly endless

regime of our Lord God King and all that follow. Perhaps these songs can bring you some joy as they did me while you shiver scared in the dark cell you once called your home.

ODIO – "Ancora" LP (Agipunk)
This Oakland powerhouse took it up more than a few notches in venom and ferocity with this long awaited release adding some spark to the near lifeless corpse known as the Bay Area punk scene. Their name translates to "Hate." Get it.

PRISION POSTUMO – "4 Canciones!!" CS (self-released)
Taking all the classic PLUGZ-like catchiness of their first tape and pissing them off just that much more. One of the best live bands you'll see as well.

KARBONITE – "Religious War Continues" EP (Nightrider)
This band keeps getting better through lineup changes and is truly the glue keeping the Slow Death San Diego scene pumping. This flexi is fierce and way too short as well as being the last release from "banned from *MRR*" Ramona / Amelia's much missed record label.

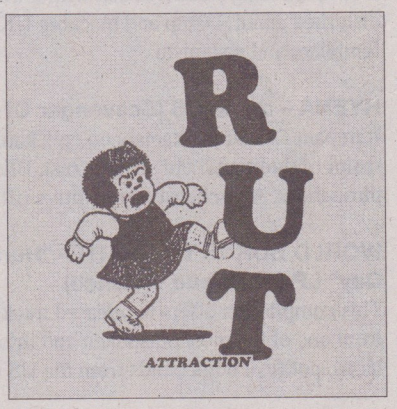
FUTURA – demo CS (self-released)
I'm torn and bloody from self-flagellation for missing this band live. "Slave To Life" followed by "Sin Salinda" might be as perfect as it got this year.

ISOTOPE – "Wake Up Screaming" CS (self-released)
How a band can be this punk in a town where the rent is higher than the price of a child on the darkweb. Why they aren't bigger than the JONAS BROTHERS is all beyond me.

RIXE – "Bapteme Du Feu" EP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
RIXE's records are getting better and heavier with every release. I'm expecting full corpsepaint in 2018. Oi!

AUSENCIA / NARCOESTADO – split EP (Todo Destruido)
L.A.'s finest Latinx French Oi! band goes faster hardcore and catchy as fuck all at the same time while Mexico City's boot party of a good time give us more to sing about.

STRANGERS – "The Mad" CS (Silenzio Statico)
The muddy sound quality on this actually adds to haunting nature of this band. Creepy and beautiful without being goth and while still being punk as fuck.



POBREZA MENTAL – demo CS (self-released)
This one crept into my brain shortly before years end. Know almost nothing about this NYC band but they have the primal South American primitive punk sound down.

NO CLASS – "Boot Boys" EP (self-released)
Like ANGRY ANDERSON doing "We Are The League" with MICK GEGGUS and LOBBY LOYDE playing guitar (or at least picking up the bar tab at a three day bike party). Both rocking and exhausting.

That's all I'm allowed to write under the new regime but I do have to mention to the DEATH VALLEY CS, the MACABRE demo, DRUGCHARGE live, and the K9-67 "Punk" EP that came out just too late for last years list but is the most primal and real outsider band you may ever hear. Now start a band, kill a cop, or just pretend like you care. RIP Dik Mik, RIP Charles Manson.

JASON RYAN

Jason Ryan is a record reviewer at MRR.

VITTNA – CS (self-released)
Bloodcurdling hardcore punk with slicing angular riffs, drumming that brutalizes throughout and rabid, frothing vocals leading a beast pack. This is my favorite tape of the year. Death to us all.

SUCCUMB – LP (The Flenser)
Harrowing, eviscerating witchangel death metal with switch-lashes of crust and chain-whippings of grind. Their debut is fresh, wild, and bound to no one extreme categorization, or anything for that matter.

DEVIL MASTER – "Inhabit The Corpse" CS (self-released)
Howling old school death metal I'm filing under punk by today's conventions. Raw, buzzing, wound-

stinging, oozing, haunting, weird subtle effects. Parts horror movie, parts horrible garbage. Open the pungent lid, get into it.

THE ARSON PROJECT – "Disgust" LP (Power It Up)
Scandinavian hardcore that does not stay within the traditional parameters of mangel / käng. A furious cold slap of reality delivered from the guts of hardcore punk and the fight of organic grindcore.

LIVID / NO FUNERAL – split LP (Live Fast Die)
Sorrowful desolate doom metal from both bands. Rough snarling vocals on one side, eulogized by hypnotic misery on the other.

PETITE – CS (self-released)
An aggressive Oi!-de-vivre of siren-like flares and bolstering brute—from moody death rock roots, with diminutive riffs, to copious street stomping rhythm.

BASIC DICKS – demo CS (Rad Nauseam / Richter Scale)
A raw, cheering scream attack with drawn-out chords sung with disturbed ennui. Damp and macabre UK punk with a focus on feminism and veganism.

HYENA – demo CS (Scavenger Of Death)
Rampant D-beat that teeters on epic hardcore while remaining in the realm of traditional old school crust. Blistering, volcanic changes throughout. Apprehensive, repetitive riffs that feel axphyxiating.

WORLD BURNS TO DEATH – "Here A Dream Dies Every Day" LP (Analogue Violence)
This compilation offers unreleased tracks from 2003 through 2010 from one of the most outspoken and informed, yet misanthropically-laced, political punk bands from the US this dark millennium.

NECROT – "The Blood Offerings" LP (Tankcrimes)
A splattering Bay Area death crust band who can't stop bringing the world down. This sophomore LP is essential and is the logical evolution from their three pulverizing tapes and debut LP.

FAVORITE REISSUES:
EXIT-STANCE – "While Backs Are Turned..." LP (PHR) / DISCARD – "Four Minutes Past Midnight" LP (Unrest) / ACEPHALIX – "Deathless Master" LP (Agipunk)

SORRY STATE

Sorry State Records is a record label, brick-and-mortar store, and distro based in Raleigh, North Carolina.

PURA MANIA – "Cerebros Punk" LP (CV / Hysteria)
Much current-era punk can feel like a low-stakes formal exercise, but Pura Mania have always felt like they meant it in a way that few other bands do. Their music feels real and raw and important in a way that makes me feel like a teenager again. Their giant melodies (which often recall *New Age*-era BLITZ) definitely gratify the teenager inside this 40-year-old corporeal vessel, but the songs also have enough density, texture, and inventiveness to please even the most discerning aesthete. Here's hoping there's more PURA MANIA music to come.

EEL – "Night Parade of 100 Demons" LP (Beach Impediment)
This record bears more than a passing resemblance to noisy Japanese classic bands like GISM, MOBS, and ZOUO, but EEL are far more than just a tribute band. They use the aforementioned bands' aesthetic framework as the launching pad for their own unique psychedelic journey. This record has so much texture that listening to it is akin to running your hand across fine artisan cloth, but it also induces fist-pumping just as well as any hardcore record in your collection.

ISS – "(Endless Pussyfooting)" LP (Erste Theke Tonträger)
ISS aren't the first punk band to build songs out of samples, but I'd argue that they're the best to do it so far. Whether you're listening to

this for the big hooks or the clever punk in-jokes and references (of which there are too many to count) you'll find yourself spinning this again and again. Everyonee that I've played this for has loved it.

TESTA DURA – "Lotta Continua" EP (Even Worse)
What if Randy Uchida from GISM had moved to Washington, DC in 1980 and started a band just in time to record at Inner Ear and contribute songs to the Flex Your Head compilation? If that had actually happened, I'm guessing it would have sounded something like this TESTA DURA EP. Throw in a mad Italian ranting on the mic like he's auditioning for CHEETAH CHROME MOTHERFUCKERS or early NEGAZIONE and you have one of the best hardcore records of the year.

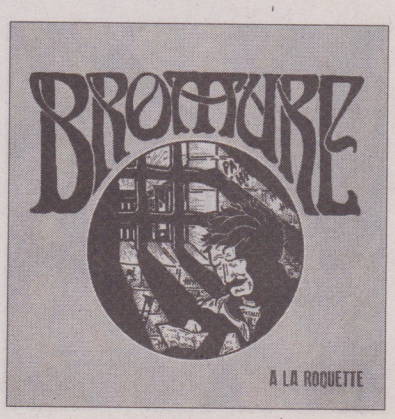
IMPALERS – "Cellar Dweller" LP (540)
I remember the week this record started showing up in people's mailboxes...I'd see punk friends around town and ask, "have you heard the new IMPALERS?" and we'd exchange a look of stupefied awe. Their previous record had already established IMPALERS as the world's finest purveyors of manic, everything-in-the-red psychedelic D-beat, and honestly I thought there was no way that they were going to top it. However, *Cellar Dweller* proves me and everyone else wrong.

NEON – "Neon Is Life" CS (Thrilling Living)
There are a number of recent punk bands—lots of them happen to be from London and / or the Bay Area of California—who seem to be pulling on a thread of punk's historical tapestry that rejects the macho rock-isms of the SEX PISTOLS or BLACK FLAG in favor of something looser, artsier, and more organic. NEON's cassette is my favorite recording of this ilk to come out this year, and it is truly wild...It manages to break all kinds of rules that I didn't even know I was following. Every time I listen to this tape I'm amazed at the way that NEON is able to subvert so many of hardcore's tropes and conventions while still sounding—to me, at least—like a hardcore band. There are times when I think that maybe I've outgrown hardcore, but NEON reminds me that there's something real and vital at the genre's core that persists no matter how frustrated I get with the culture that has evolved around it.

MIDNITE SNAXXX – "Chew On This" LP (Pelican Pow Wow)
There isn't a lot of melodic punk on my list because, from my perspective at least, most bands who take a more melodic, song-oriented approach to punk tend to be more polished, careerist, and ultimately less interesting to me. MIDNITE SNAXXX are a glaring exception to that generalization. They've been cranking out brilliant songs for a while now and even with a mostly-new lineup the hit parade hasn't stopped. If you have fond memories of the glory days of Rip Off Records this one is a no-brainer, but this band's updated take on the RAMONES formula is classy enough to rope in even an avowed snob like myself.

S.H.I.T. – "I" EP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
Much like EEL, S.H.I.T. take noisy Japanese punk and use it as a kind of transport vessel to carry them on their own psychedelic journey. However, whereas EEL tend to be manic and unhinged, on this EP S.H.I.T. keep things locked in at a more controlled pace. Rather than making the music sound tamer, this makes these songs even more intense, like you're white-knuckling your way through the furthest-out point on your acid trip, whispering to yourself over and over that you are, in fact, in control. Or are you?

SHEER MAG – "Need To Feel Your Love" LP (Wilsuns)
I'm not sure if it's cool to like SHEER MAG anymore, but I'd be lying if I said that *Need to Feel Your Love* wasn't one of my most-played records of 2017. There are a lot of haters out there, but I'm fascinated with the way that SHEER MAG seem so determined to grow artistically. They take some big risks here by integrating elements of soul and country into their sound, but experimenting with different genres doesn't diminish the power of their songwriting one iota. Further, as far as I know SHEER MAG have pursued their artistic ambitions without compromising their commitment to punk's ideals, and that's refreshing to see in an era when so many former punks abandon DIY at the first whiff of a dollar bill.



OTHER REALLY GOOD PUNK RECORDS FROM 2017:
DAGGER – "Writhing In The Light Of The Moon" EP (Lengua Armada) / WARM BODIES – "My Burning Love" EP (Thrilling Living) / KALEIDOSCOPE – "Volume 3" 12" (Feel It) / CAREER SUICIDE – "Machine Response" LP (Deranged / Static Shock) / RUBBLE – EP (Distort Reality) / HOUSEWIVES – 12" (ever/never) / RASHŌMON – "Demo 2017" EP (self-released / Society Bleeds) / MUFF DIVERS – "Dreams of the Gentlest Texture" LP (Lumpy) / MOZART – "Nasty" EP (Iron Lung) / INSTITUTE – "Subordination" LP (Sacred Bones) / TARANTÜLA – "I Live Free" EP (Lengua Armada) / HALDOL – "The Totalitarianism of Everyday Life" LP (World Gone Mad) / FLESH WORLD – "Into The Shroud" LP (Dark Entries) / GSP – 12" (Thrilling Living) / HARAM – "When You Have Won, You Have Lost" LP (Toxic State / La Vida Es Un Mus) / HEAVY METAL – "LP2" LP (Static Age) / BRAINBOMBS – "Inferno" LP (Skrammel)

TURBO!

Turbo! is the only person on the planet with the Oi! blood type.

Listen up you bozos, 2017 was another banner year for Oi! Are you surprised? Here are some undisputed truths we learned about Oi! this year: Oi! is Rocky Balboa *and* Apollo Creed. Oi! is Michael *and* LeBron, Joe Montana *and* Tom Brady. Oi! is *Citizen Kane and Die Hard*. (Or, *Aliens*!) Oi! is finding $20 on the way to the bar Friday night, waking up late Saturday morning and realizing it's a three-day weekend. Oi! is eating an apple pie for dinner and then the next day someone you think is cute saying "You look cute." Oi! is water *and* coffee, Sisko *and* Picard, hell! *Star Trek and Star Wars*. It's the GOAT, ya feel me? The rest of the records in this issue— few exceptions—feel like throwing good money after bad. We're living in the time of peak punk after all. If yer tired of losing out on other subgenres check out ten of the best (cough—*MRR* approved—cough) Oi! records I listened to this year.

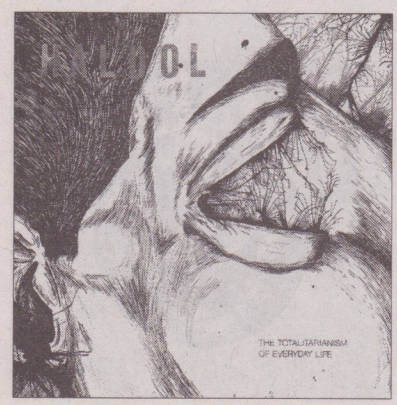
BROMURE – "A La Roquette" EP (Une Vie Pour Rien?)
Little known fact: the saxophone's natural habitat is French Oi! BROMURE handily meld homage and innovation in a tight EP that demands repeated listens but also ignites an urge to listen to the classic French skinhead bands that influenced them, which in turn makes me want to listen to more BROMURE. It's a great cycle to be stuck in.

BURDEN – "Time Tryth Truth / Divided" (NxA / Under Watchful Eyes)
A vinyl reissue of the stunning 2013 out of print demo. This is Boston HC by way of mid '80s R.O.R. at its finest. When taste and talent collide you get BURDEN. *"Now turn your back / And look at the daw n/ Uncertain future / That stretches beyond / In a world that is governed / By the history / Of triumph for some / For others misery!"*

CONCRETE ELITE – "Iron Rose" LP (Longshot / Rebellion)
Fools are not suffered, and fucks are not given in the land of CONCRETE ELITE. This was one of the most brutal and menacing releases I heard this year. Everything you'd expect from an American HC / Oi! band named CONCRETE. *"Stronger! Stronger! Stronger! Than! Ever! Be! Fore!"*

FUERZA BRUTA – "Verdugo" 12" (Foreign Legion / Under Watchful Eyes)
Hostile Midwest Oi! Loud and proud. *Verdugo* represents a pinnacle for what is becoming the de rigueur sound of American Oi! Equal parts South American hardcore and early '90s Japanese Oi! mixed in with American boot-punk. And voila! *Carecas do* Chitown! No cops allowed.

THE GIFT – "Running Around this Town" LP (Time for Action)
Melancholy power-pop played by French hardmods! The soundtrack of a GS riding through rain darkened streets at night. Songs are set up so tight and *perfect* with melodies that are non-stop and communicable. *"Here is the truth I've been hiding / It's been so long in the making / Everything has one ending..."*



HAMMER AND THE NAILS – EP (Rock 'N' Roll Disgrace / Spirit Of The Streets)
This EP is worthy of a spot on here alone for the cover of the MAX FROST and the TROOPERS psych-garage stomper from *Wild in the Streets*, "Shape of Things to Come." It's a wah-wah wall of sound. The other two songs are tight as well and find these Bostonian vets continuing to fly in the face of streetpunk convention by crafting hard and dirty rock'n'roll burners that lack any of the cliché or pastiche that plague lesser Oi! bands.

KING'S CROSS – "Break the Silence" 12" (Powerfist)
Attention! Skins Only! Four songs of anti-social, anti-society Viking tinged skinhead-rock that will

result in you ripping your ceiling apart. *"The anger is growing under the surface / Blind sheep are following the path of no purpose / No compromise and no surrender / The battle cries on our path to the pillage and plunder!"* This is everything that is great about skinhead music!

SWEET FUCK ALL – "Mission Accomplished" LP (Rebellion / Longshot)
These Philly boot boys are keeping the spirit of '89 alive and well. Intelligent and tough modern US of Oi! *"The Stars and Stripes / Fly the flag / American skinhead pride!"* Yes sir!

THE TEMPLARS – "Deus Vult" LP (Pirates Press / Randale / Templecombe)
How could this not be on here? Recorded over six years by the whole band at Acre Studios, *Deus Vult* is a new classic from the greatest American Oi! band. Debate is welcome on that but what's not up for debate is the power found on this LP. Nothing is reinvented here. There are no ska parts or bubbling bass lines. Just bare bones NYC Oi! Going on nearly 25 years as a band this LP finds them musically back at their peak. Killer. Here's to the TEMPLARS!

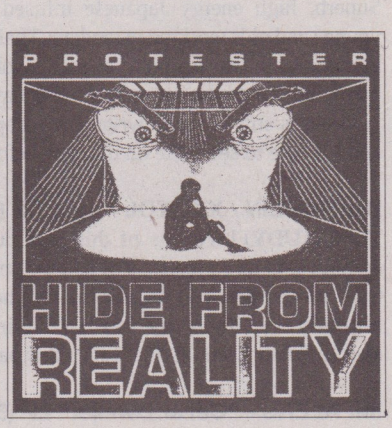
YESTERDAY'S HEROES – "Los Héroes Del Aye" EP (Une Force, Un Hymne)
This is the second EP from these Medellin skinheads who have destroyed our *cabezas* with their metal-tinted Oi! The riffs are unstoppable! The vocals are delivered with an angry rasp that commands your attention. Impeccable use of gang-vocals brings it all together. Obliterate yourself!

HONORABLE MENTIONS:
AGGRO GANG, BATTALION, BKD, BRASSKNUCKLE, COCK SPARRER, CODI DE SILENCI, COMBAT FORCE, DEATH RIDGE BOYS, DRAKKAR, the ENFORCERS, KÄNSLANS PARTISAN, LION'S LAW, LION'S SHARE, MOB MENTALITY, OFISBOYZ, ON THE ROPES, OUTREAU, PETITE, RIXE, RUDE RIOT, the STANCE, WERGILD...I'm forgetting a bunch. Anyone one who's making Oi! music or keeping the scene alive in the 21st century, this Bud's for you!

JENSEN WARD

Jensen Ward runs Iron Lung Records. They know what they like.

After reading through what I had written for a lot of these records, the common theme in my musical exploration seems to be finding bands that like to push themselves beyond what's expected from them. And bands that like to push people's buttons...damn I love those. Punks are some weird fucking people. Wouldn't have it any other way. There's a lot of rage and lot of escapism in this year's releases and rightfully so. The world is a mess and it's global intelligence seems to be regressing back to the stone age. Here are a few beacons of hope for my 2017 memory pages.

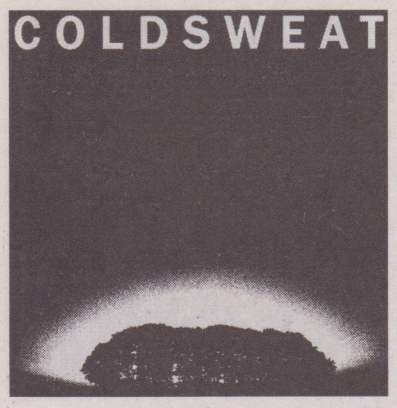


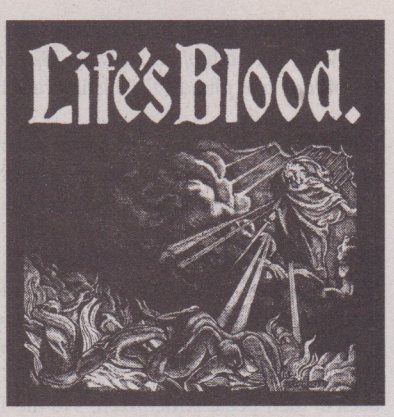
LEBENDEN TOTEN – "Mind Parasites" LP (Overthrow / self-released) and **"Static" 12" (Iron Lung)**
Though they were separate recording sessions, these go hand in hand for me. The best hardcore punk output of the year. This band has grown immensely, from a scrappy mess to a masterful goth fueled noise punk powerhouse. If when the 2003 demo came out, someone had suggested listening to it with the thought of layered talky vocal tracks and keyboard parts added I would have laughed them out of the room. We, and they, have come a long way. LEBENDEN TOTEN managed to leave the rest of us breathing toxic earth dust though. They exist in some outer darkness/genius vortex of pure future while other bands are still trying to figure out how to make their chorus pedals work right.

THE WORLD – "First World Record" LP (Upset The Rhythm)
First World Record is a real breath of fresh air. Reminds me of CRAVATS, KLEENEX, and GANG OF FOUR, all of which I love. There's a wonderful maturity about how innocent and open this album sounds. The bongos and sax totally work without the usual jarring effect. The guitars are nice and sharp too. It's hard to explain really and maybe it's because I don't listen to a lot of skronky music but this just feels good. I like feeling good from time to time.

BIB – "Moshpit" EP (Pop Wig)
The piano intro really hooked me on this. I almost wanted the whole ep to be like that. It would completely alienate everyone save for those who crave experimentation and unpredictability in the typically mundane parameters of modern hardcore. I like how this band is progressing and I'll be keeping a keen eye out for a provocative LP. Keep pushing. BIB is BIB. They won't let me down.

DAGGER – "Writhing In The Light Of The Moon" EP (Lengua Armada)
Meat and meat, no potatoes hardcore straight outta the basements of tornado country. Indiana has been





killing it last few years and "Writhing…" is another brick in the wall keeping punks safe from boring music and college classes.

HARAM – "When You Have Won, You Have Lost" LP (Toxic State / La Vida Es Un Mus)
Most of the Toxic State stuff has a very dependable presentation and (not always favorable) sound but this is a step up for me. The graphics are concise and intriguing. The drumming is left handed and therefore the approach to the beat just feels new. I love a lefty pounder. The Arabic language is an intensely fresh voice for the world stage of punks and political awareness. Plus when this guy delivers it live it looks fucking insane.

RUBBER MATE – "Cha Boi / Hog Tied" (Total Punk)
This band just oozes contempt and I love it. Poisonous drug punk that leaves me feeling gross and violent.

RASHŌMON – "Demo 2017" EP (self-released / Society Bleeds)
Superb, high energy Japanese infused hardcore from DC hardcore youngs and olds working in tandem. Their unique riffs and approach has to come from that fusion of ages. I'm told most of the music is written by the guitarist who has maybe quit playing live music altogether this year but is still down to write. Let's hope so. Rashōmon is very fresh and I'd hate to see it die on the vine before it really gets going.

DAUÐYFLIN / XYLITOL – split CS (self-released)
The DAUÐYFLIN side of this tape burned me all the way up and continued to do so for 100s of listens. I may be partial to the band since they are the best people and we did their completely ripping LP but seriously even if this tape was just "Fyrirlitning" repeated on both sides start to finish it would rule. I love this band.

IMPALERS – "Cellar Dweller" LP (540)
Sounds like best era POISON IDEA playing Swedish hardcore with just enough modern touch to make it totally fresh. So ripping. Definitely has that timeless / genreless Texas swagger that always mops the club with then weaker outfits and throws them out with the trash. Strong shit that is highly recommended.

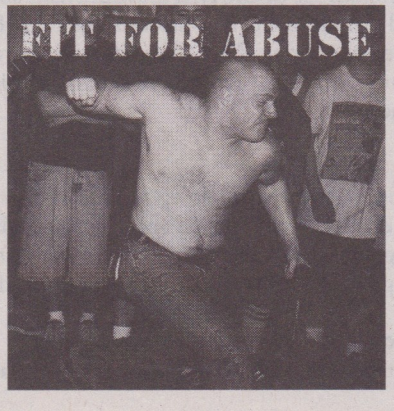
FNU CLONE INC. – "Binary Or Die" LP (Total Punk)
A totally fucked noise garage no budget scum punk fuck off to the senses. Still catchy though like a good garage record should be. They nailed the nihilistic good times mood perfectly. Annoying and glorious.

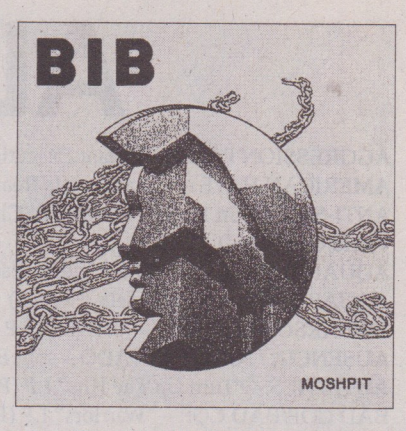
SHIVAUN WATCHORN

Shivaun Watchorn is the archive coordinator for Maximum Rocknroll.

2017 felt like taking a rollercoaster to hell. Not much new punk grabbed me, but the new records on this list were escape valves for the frustration and hopelessness and sheer stupidity of the Trump era. This year's new and old favorites (VITAL IDLES is sneaking in as a December 2016 release) run the gamut from godhead noise (LEBENDEN TOTEN, SHITLICKERS) to NYHC classics (LIFE'S BLOOD, RAW DEAL) to freaky sounds for freaky girls (GSP, Y PANTS). FIREWALKER makes my list for the third year in a row, a portal to my soul! I finally got to see COLD SWEAT, and I'm stoked to see their once scarce opus available again. As on this list, I hope all-male bands are a thing of the past in 2018, and any defenders of the old bullshit order are roundly mocked. Without further ado...

NEW RELEASES:
GSP – 12" (Thrilling Living)
FIREWALKER – LP (Pop Wig)
PATSY – "LA Women" 12" (La Vida Es Un Mus)
AQUARIUM – demo CS (self-released)
VITAL IDLES – "My Sentiments / The Garden" (Not Unloved)
LEBENDEN TOTEN – "Mind Parasites" LP (Overthrow / self-released)
LEMONADE – "Pink" EP (Not Normal / Thrilling Living)





PIÑÉN – "Vida" EP (Hurricane / self-released)
STEFAN CHRISTENSEN – "Shake Off the Village" LP (C/Site)
PROTESTER – "Hide From Reality" LP (Trash King)

REISSUES / ARCHIVAL:
SHITLICKERS – "Cracked Cop Skulls" EP (Negative Insight Zine)
DANGEROUS RHYTHM – "Stray Cat Blues" EP (Munster)
LIFE'S BLOOD – "Hardcore A.D. 1988" LP (Prank)
COLD SWEAT – "Blinded" LP (Iron Lung)
RAW DEAL – "Raw Deal Demo 88" 12" (Killing Time)
FAST CARS – "The Kids Just Wanna Dance / You're So Funny" (Breakout)
Y PANTS – 12" and **"Beat It Down" LP (Water Wing)**
PERFORMING FERRET BAND – LP (Discos Alehop / Beat Generation) and **"Brow Beaten" EP (Insolito)**
FIT FOR ABUSE – "The Psycho Ray Sessions" EP (Warthog Speak)
MORBID OPERA – LP (Vinyl Rites)

STATISTICS

Every single person had at least one unique title on their Year End Top Ten list. Given that there are 272 titles on this list from 262 artists, it speaks volumes about the eclectic listening habits of *Maximum Rocknroll*'s friends and shitworkers. That being said, there were a few strong trends in this year's voting habits.

TOP FIVE MOST POPULAR RECORD LABELS (barring the ever prolific "self-released"):
LA VIDA ES UN MUS: 37 mentions
THRILLING LIVING: 23 mentions
IRON LUNG: 12 mentions
LENGUA ARMADA: 11 mentions
LUMPY: 10 mentions

TOP FIVE RECORD LABELS WITH THE LARGEST NUMBER OF DISCREET TITLES:
LA VIDA ES UN MUS: 16 titles
LUMPY: 7 titles
THRILLING LIVING: 6 titles
TOTAL PUNK: 6 titles
FAT WRECK: 5 titles

TOP FIVE MOST POPULAR ARTISTS:
GSP
HARAM
LEBENDEN TOTEN
MOZART
EXIT ORDER

NUMBER OF TITLES THAT RECEIVED ONE MENTION:
192

NUMBER OF TITLES THAT RECEIVED TWO MENTIONS:
38

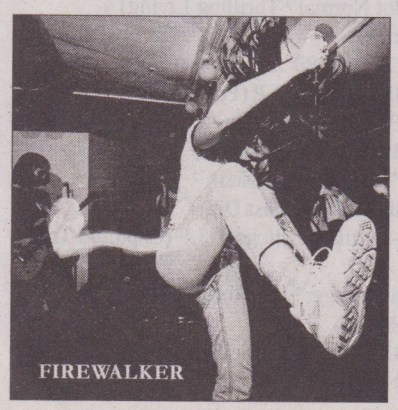
NUMBER OF LPS:
128

NUMBER OF RELEASES WITH DEMO IN THE TITLE:
13

NUMBER OF CASSETTES:
30

NUMBER OF SELF-RELEASED TITLES:
19

NUMBER OF MAJOR LABEL RELEASES:
0



ALL OF THE REASO

AGGRESSION PACT – "Instant Execution" EP (Painkiller)
AMERICAN HATE – "Our Love Is Real" LP (Not Normal)
ANTI-SEX – "Un Mejor Futuro" LP (Cintas Pepe / Thrilling Living / World Gone Mad)
AQUARIAN BLOOD – "Last Nite In Paradise" LP (Goner)
AQUARIUM – demo CS (self-released)
THE ARSON PROJECT – "Disgust" LP (Power It Up)
AUSENCIA / NARCOESTADO – split EP (Todo Destruido)
AUTISTICS – "Turn Up The Hits" LP (Puke N Vomit)
BAD COP/BAD COP – "Warriors" LP (Fat Wreck)
BAD DADDIES – "Over 30 Singles" LP (Emotional Response)
BARCELONA – "Un Último Ultrasonido Nació Y Murió En Barcelona" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
BASIC DICKS – demo CS (Rad Nauseam / Richter Scale)
BEATNIKS – "Beatnik Theme" EP (Neck Chop)
BENT – "Mattress Springs" EP (Emotional Rescue)
BENT – "Snakes and Shapes" LP (Moontown)
BIB – "Moshpit" EP (Pop Wig)
BIG MESS – 45 (Elektriske Plader / Indisciplinarian)
BLEEDING GUMS – "II" EP (Neck Chop)
BROMURE – "A La Roquette" EP (Une Vie Pour Rien?)
BUCK BILOXI – "Hollow Earth" EP (Holotrash)
THE BUG – "Humbug; Or, So Many Awful Things" EP (IFB / Not Normal)
BURDEN – "Time Tryth Truth / Divided" (NxA / Under Watchful Eyes)
CAREER SUICIDE – "Machine Response" LP (Deranged / Static Shock)
CARSICKNESS – "1979–1982" LP (Get Hip)
THE CAVEMEN – "Band In BC" EP (Weirdly)
CELEBRITY HANDSHAKE – EP (Eastern Prawn)
CHEATER SLICKS – "Destination Lonely" LP (Almost Ready)
CHROME REVERSE – "They Wanna Fight!" LP (Mag Wheels)
COKE BUST / DESPISE YOU – split EP (Bones Brigade / To Live A Lie)
COLD BEAT – "Chaos By Invitation" LP (Crime On The Moon)
COLD LEATHER – "Past Remedy" EP (Sabotage)
COLD SWEAT – "Blinded" LP (Iron Lung)
COME ON – LP (Manufactured Recordings)
COMET GAIN – "City Fallen Leaves" LP (M'lady's)
COMET GAIN – "Réalistes" LP (M'lady's)
CONCRETE ELITE – "Iron Rose" LP (Longshot / Rebellion)
THE COWBOY – "The Cowboy Album" LP (Drunken Sailor / Fashionable Idiots)
THE COWBOYS – LP (HoZac)
CROOKED BANGS – "II" LP (Nervous Intent)
CRUSADER DE DEUS – "Clássicos Republicanos" CS (Dama da Noite)
CTMF featuring The Dear Watson Sound – boxset (Damaged Goods)
DAGGER – "Writhing In The Light Of The Moon" EP (Lengua Armada)
DAME – "Glitch" EP (Charm School)
DANGEROUS RHYTHM – "Stray Cat Blues" EP (Munster)
DANNY BURK & THE INVADERS – 45 (Certified PR)
DAVID NANCE – "Do The Negative Boogie" LP (Ba-Da-Bing!)
DEBILS – LP (Static Age)
DECENT CRIMINAL – "Bloom" LP (Dodgeball)
DENDÖ MARIONETTE – LP (Bitter Lake / Mouse)
DEVIL MASTER – "Inhabit The Corpse" CS (self-released)
DINOSAURS – LP (ReRun)
THE DOGS – "Rehearsals 1974" LP (Mémoire Neuve)
EEL – "Night Parade Of 100 Demons" LP (Beach Impediment)
ELIX-R – "6 hrs" CS (Pharm House)
ENDON – "Through The Mirror" LP (Daymare / Hydra Head)
EXIT ORDER – "Seed of Hysteria" LP (Side Two / La Vida Es Un Mus)
FAST CARS – "The Kids Just Wanna Dance / You're So Funny" (Breakout)
FEEDTIME – "Gas" LP (In The Red)
FIREWALKER – LP (Pop Wig)
FLESH WORLD – "Into the Shroud" LP (Dark Entries)
FNU CLONE INC. – "Binary Or Die" LP (Total Punk)
FOOD & MONEY – "1979–1982" LP (Alona's Dream)
FRENZAL RHOMB – "Hi-Vis High Tea" LP (Fat Wreck)
FUERZA BRUTA – "Verdugo" 12" (Foreign Legion / Under Watchful Eyes)
FUTURA – demo CS (self-released)
FYPM – "Dumbed Down" LP (Tankcrimes)
GEN POP – "On The Screen" EP (Lumpy)
GG KING – "Another Dimension" EP (Scavenger of Death)
THE GIFT – "Running Around this Town" LP (Time for Action)
GLORIOUS? – "Neverending Butchery" EP (Brain Solvent Propaganda)
GLUE – LP (Glue / La Vida Es Un Mus)
GSP – 12" (Thrilling Living)
HAMMER AND THE NAILS – EP (Rock'N'Roll Disgrace / Spirit Of The Streets)
HARAM – "When You Have Won, You Have Lost" LP (Toxic State / La Vida Es Un Mus)
HEAVY METAL – "LP2" LP (Static Age)
HIRS COLLECTIVE – "How To Stop Street Harassment" EP (Get Better)
HOMELESS GOSPEL CHOIR – "Presents: Normal" (A-F)
HUSKER DU – "Savage Young Du" LP boxset (Numero Group)
HYENA – demo CS (Scavenger Of Death)
IMPALERS – "Cellar Dweller" LP (540)
INSTITUTE – "Subordination" LP (Sacred Bones)
ISOTOPE – "Wake Up Screaming" CS (self-released)
ISS – "(Endless Pussyfooting)" LP (Erste Theke Tonträger)
JAMES ARTHUR'S MANHUNT – 45 (Spacecase)
JOHNNY MOPED – "Catatonic / Hard Lovin' Man" (Damaged Goods)
JUDY AND THE JERKS – "Alive At The Skatepark" CS (Earth Girl)
JULIANA R – "Tarefas Intermináveis" Digital (A Onda Errada)
JUNTA – "Vertigem" EP (Junta Tapes)
KALEIDOSCOPE – "Volume 3" 12" (Feel It)
KARBONITE – "Religious War Continues" EP (Nightrider)
KATASTROF – "Falksa Leenden" EP (Beach Impediment)
KIDS INSANE – "Cluster" LP (Redfield)
KING WOMAN – "Created in the Image of Suffering" LP (Relapse)
KING'S CROSS – "Break the Silence" 12" (Powerfist)
KOHTI TUHOA – "Pelon Neljäs Valtakunta" LP (Southern Lord / Svart)
KURRAKÄ – "Otra Dimensión" CS (Oscuridad En Mi Vida)
LA VASE – CS (self-released)
LEBENDEN TOTEN – "Mind Parasites" LP (Overthrow / self-released)
LEBENDEN TOTEN – "Static!" 12" (Iron Lung)
LEMONADE – "Pink" EP (Not Normal / Thrilling Living)
LIFE STINKS – 45 (Total Punk)
LIFE'S BLOOD – "Hardcore A.D. 1988" LP (Prank)
THE LILLINGTONS – "Stella Sapiente" LP (Fat Wreck)
LIMP WRIST – "Facades" LP (Lengua Armada / La Vida Es Un Mus)
LIQUIDS – "Hot Liqs" LP (Hip Kid / Not Normal)
LITHICS – "Wendy Kraemer" CS (self-released)
LIVID / NO FUNERAL – split LP (Live Fast Die)
LOOK BLUE GO PURPLE – "Still Bewitched" LP (Captured Tracks / Flying Nun)
LOUIE LOUIE – "Friend of a Stranger" LP (Born Losers)
LOWLIFE – "Leaders" EP (HoZac)
LUMPY AND THE DUMPERS – "Those Pickled Fuckers" LP (Lumpy)
LUX – LP (Discos Enfermos)

ONS TO LOVE 2017:

MACHO BOYS – LP (Neck Chop)
MAGIN – "Portal EP 01" Digital (self-released)
MARAUDEUR – LP (Bruit Direct Disques)
MARK CONE – "Now Showing" LP (Neck Chop)
MARY BELL – "Mary Bell" LP (Danger)
MICK TROUBLE – "It's The Mick Trouble EP" EP (Emotional Response)
MIDNITE SNAXXX – "Chew On This" LP (Pelican Pow Wow)
MOD VIGIL – LP (X-Mist)
MODERN WARFARE – "Complete Recordings" LP (ReRun)
MODO GECKO – "Sick, Twisted, Psycho, Deranged" LP (Crapoulet / FFud / Stanley Electronics / Twintoe)
MOMMY LONG LEGS – "Rock Product" EP (Youth Riot)
MORBID OPERA – LP (Vinyl Rites)
MORDECAI – "Abstract Recipe" LP (Richie)
MORDECAI – "What is Art?" EP (Sophomore Lounge)
MOZART – "Nasty" EP (Iron Lung)
MURO – "Ataque Hardcore Punk" 12" (Byllepest)
MUTUAL JERK – "He's Harmless" EP (State Laughter)
NAG – "No Flag" EP (Space Taker)
NECROT – "The Blood Offerings" LP (Tankcrimes)
NEON – "Neon / Nazi Schatzi" (Water Wing)
NEON – "Neon is Life" CS (Thrilling Living)
NO CLASS – "Boot Boys" EP (self-released)
NON-BAND – LP (Tal)
NOTS – "Cruel Friend / Violence" (Goner)
NURSE – "Foreign Object" EP (Scavenger Of Death)
NURSE – "Discography 1983-1984" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
ODIO – "Ancora" LP (Agipunk)
ÖTZI – "Ghosts" LP (LastHour / Near Dark)
PARANOID – "Praise No Deity" EP (Konton Krasher / The Sign)
PARSNIP – "Health" EP (Anti-Fade)
PATSY – "LA Women" 12" (La Vida Es Un Mus)
PAWNS – "The Gallows" LP (Mass Media)
PERFORMING FERRET BAND – LP (Discos Alehop / Beat Generation)
PERFORMING FERRET BAND – "Brow Beaten" EP (Insolito)
PETITE – CS (self-released)
PIECE WAR – "Apathy" LP (Square One Again)
PIÑÉN – "Vida" EP (Hurricane / self-released)
PLAYBOY – "Celebration" 12" (Negative Jazz)
POBREZA MENTAL – demo CS (self-released)
PRIESTS – "Nothing Feels Natural" LP (Sister Polygon)
PRISION POSTUMO – "4 Canciones!!" CS (self-released)
PRO PUBLICO BONO – "Drop By Drop I Squeeze A Slave of Myself" LP (Pasazer)
PROTESTER – "Hide From Reality" LP (Trash King)
PROTO IDIOT – "Leisure Opportunity" LP (Slovenly)
PURA MANIA – "Cerebros Punk" LP (CV / Hysteria)
PUSTOSTANY – "2012" LP (Sweet Rot)
RAKTA – "At KEXP" CS (Iron Lung)
RANK/XEROX – "M.Y.T.H." 12" (Adagio830)
RASHŌMON – "Demo 2017" EP (self-released / Society Bleeds)
RATA NEGRA – "Oido Absoluto" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
RAW DEAL – "Raw Deal Demo 88" 12" (Killing Time)
RAYS – LP (Trouble In Mind)
RAZZ – "Time Frames" 12" (Emotional Response)
RED RED KROVVY – LP (Helta Skelta)
REPTILE RANCH – LP (C/Site)
RITUAL VEIL – "Wolf In The Night" CS (Cosmonaut)
RIXE – "Bapteme Du Feu" EP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
JEFF ROSENSTOCK / SKA SUCKS – split EP (World Domination)
RUBBER MATE – "Cha Boi / Hog Tied" (Total Punk)
SARCASM – "Malarial Bog" EP (Static Shock)
SCHOOL DAMAGE – LP (Chapter)
SEX CRIME – "Song That You Love" EP (No Front Teeth)
SEX DRIVE – "Hate Home" EP (Sexy Romance)
SHEER MAG – "Need to Feel Your Love" LP (Wilsuns)
THE SHIFTERS – "A Believer / Contrast of Form" (Market Square)
S.H.I.T. – "I" EP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
SHITLICKERS – "Cracked Cop Skulls" EP (Negative Insight Zine)
SIAL – LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
SIAL – "Demo" EP (Lost in Fog)
SITES N' SOUNDS – "The Night Is So Dark / T" (Black Gladiator)
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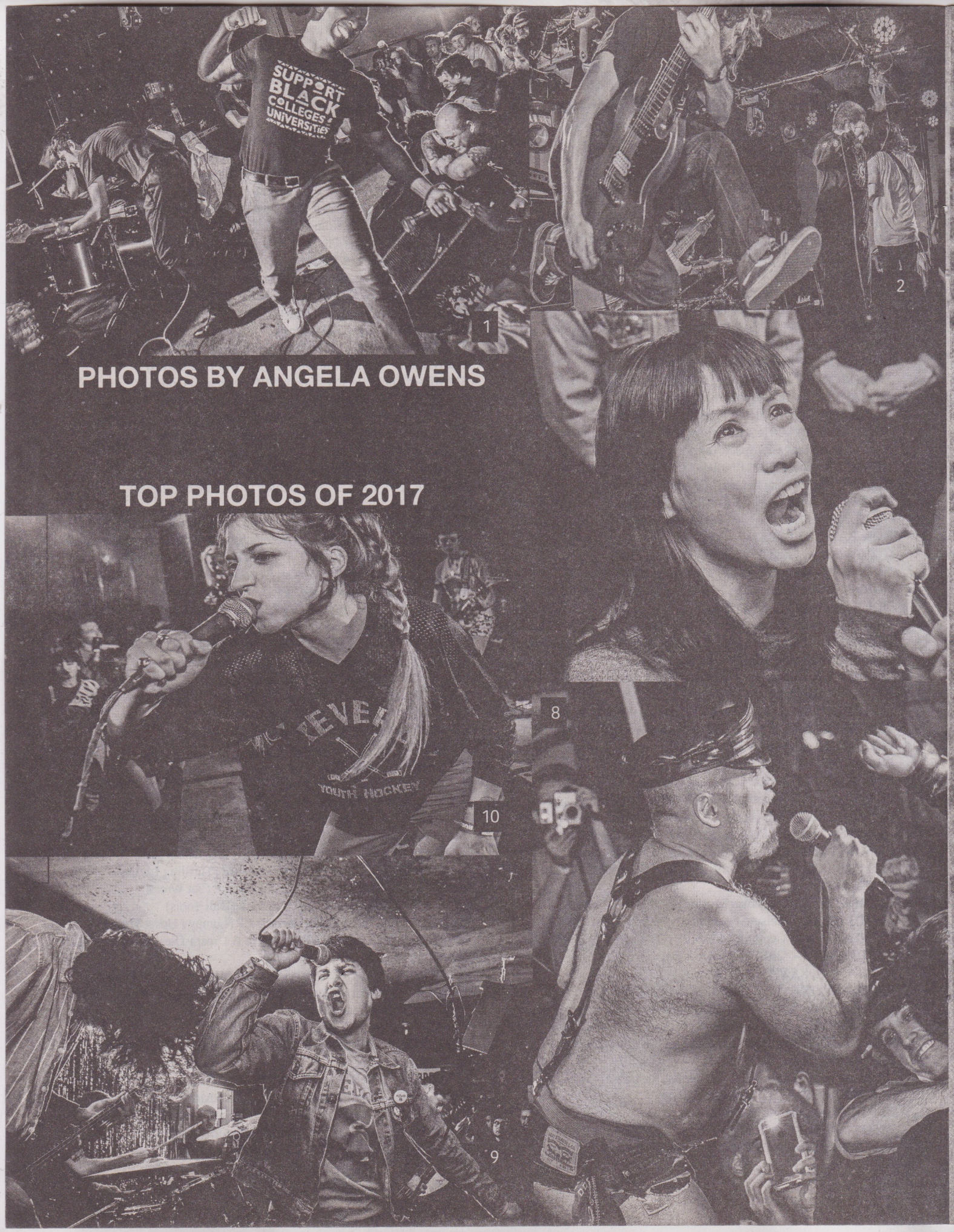
SOLID SPACE – "Space Museum" LP (Dark Entries)
STEFAN CHRISTENSEN – "Shake Off the Village" LP (C/Site)
STIFF LOVE – "For The Whole Family" CS (Chapel of Crimes)
STRANGERS – "The Mad" CS (Silenzio Statico)
STRUL – "Lennart Och Asen" LP (Ken Rock)
SUBVERSIVE RITE – "The Demos" 12" (Bloody Master)
SUCCUMB – LP (The Flenser)
SVAVELDIOXID – "Krigets Brutalitat" EP (Phobia)
SWEET FUCK ALL – "Mission Accomplished" LP (Rebellion / Longshot)
TAIWAN HOUSING PROJECT – "Veblen Death Mask" LP (Kill Rock Stars)
TANKINI – "Do U Suk" CS (Get Better)
TARANTÜLA – "I Live Free" EP (Lengua Armada)
TEENAGE BOTTLEROCKET – "Stealing the Covers" LP (Fat Wreck)
THE TEMPLARS – "Deus Vult" LP (Pirates Press / Randale / Templecombe)
TERRY – "Remember Terry" LP (Upset The Rhythm)
TESTA DURA – "Lotta Continua" EP (Even Worse)
TOTAL CONTROL – "Laughing at the System" LP (Alter)
TROPICAL TRASH – "Decisions' Empty Nest" EP (Sophomore Lounge)
TRÜMMERFRAUEN – LP (Danger)
URCHIN – "Peace Sign" EP (Roachleg)
VANILLA POPPERS – LP (Lumpy)
VIETNAM – LP (BFE)
VITAL IDLES – "My Sentiments / The Garden" (Not Unloved)
VITTNA – CS (self-released)
VOIGT/465 – "Slights Still Unspoken LP (Mental Experience)
VÄGRA – "Refuse" EP (Brain Solvent Propaganda)
WARM BODIES – "Eat Snot And Rot!" CS (self-released)
WARM BODIES – "My Burning Love" EP (Thrilling Living)
WESTERN ADDICTION – "Tremulous" LP (Fat Wreck)
WICCANS – "Sailing A Crazy Ship" LP (Dull Tools)
THE WORLD – "First World Record" LP (Lumpy / Upset The Rhythm)
WORLD BURNS TO DEATH – "Here A Dream Dies Every Day" LP (Analogue Violence)
WRETCHED – "Libero E Selvaggio" boxset (Agipunk / Chaos Produzioni)
XYLITOL – "Is Toxic To Pigs??" EP (Thrilling Living / Total Negativity)
Y PANTS – 12" (Water Wing)
Y PANTS – "Beat It Down" LP (Water Wing)
YESTERDAY'S HEROES – "Los Héroes Del Aye" EP (Une Force, Un Hymne)
YVONNE AND THE NO REGRETS – CS (S/R)
ZERODENT – "Soul Mender" EP (Almost Ready)
V/A – "Evaluate What You Tolerate!" CS (self-released)
V/A – "Typical Girls Volume 2" LP (Emotional Response)
V/A – "Sudamerica Existe" CS (Sudamerica Existe)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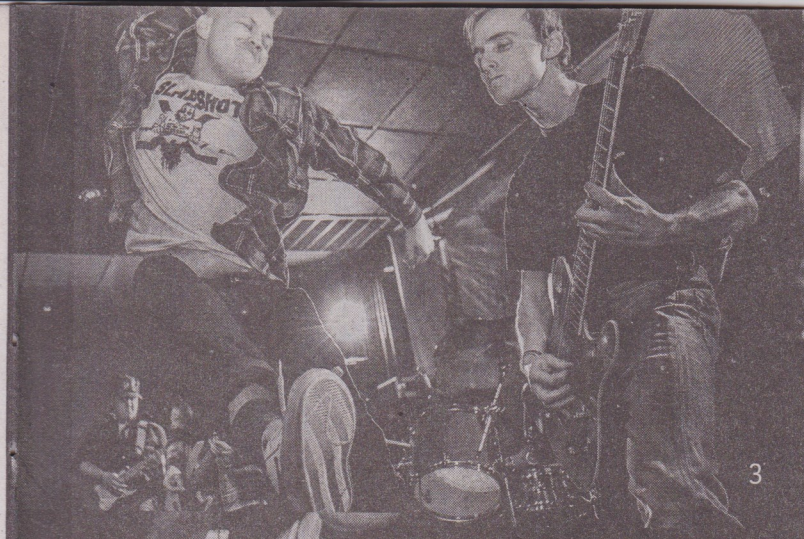

1>> PURE DISGUST
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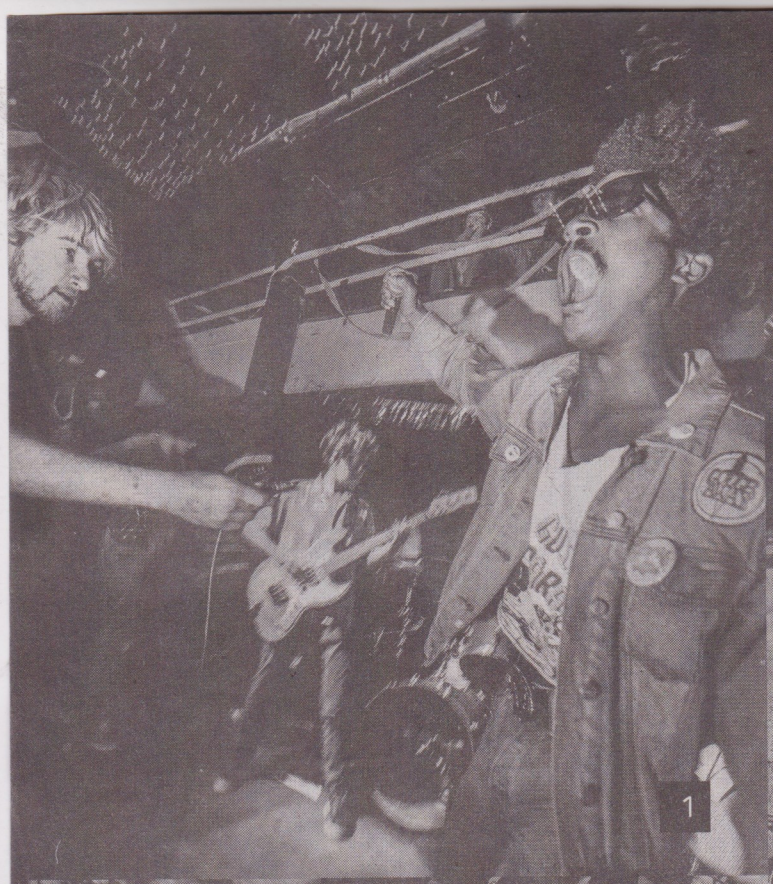

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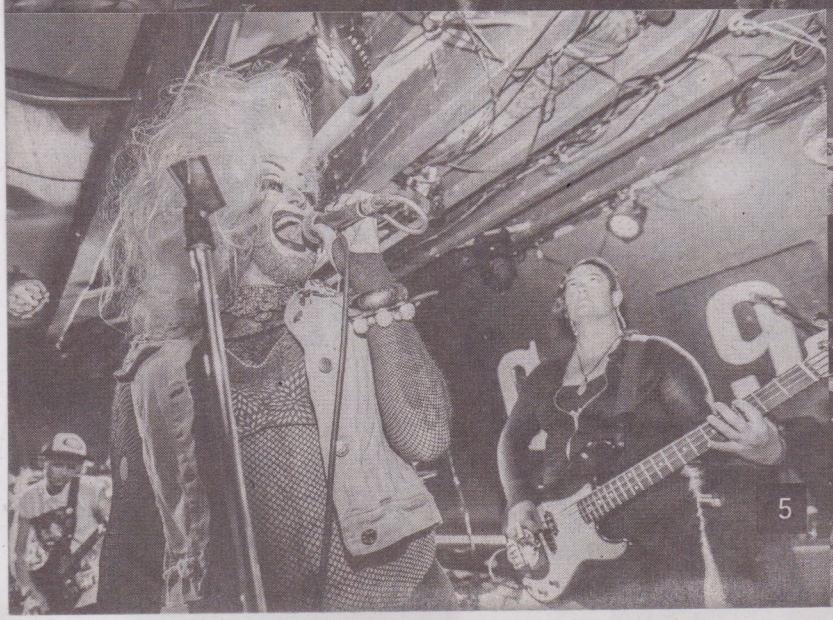

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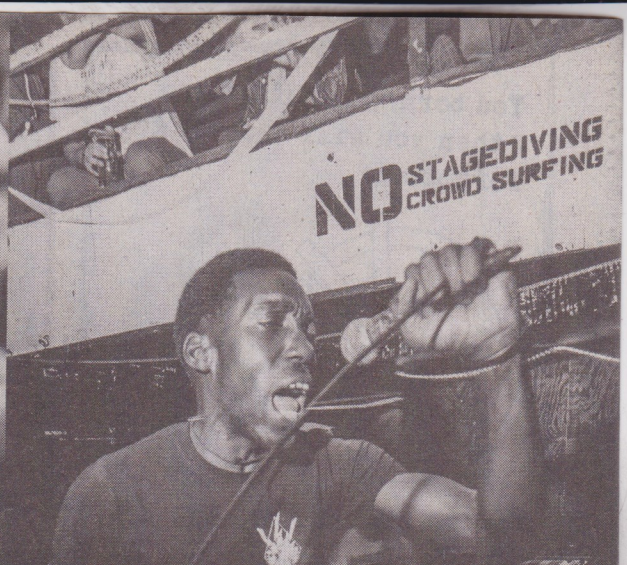

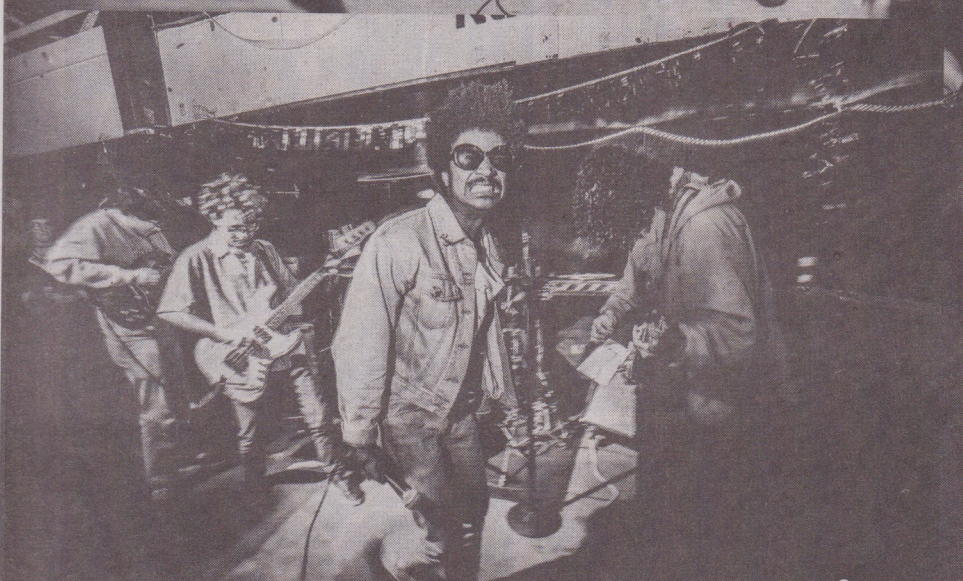

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1>> JOE BIDEN
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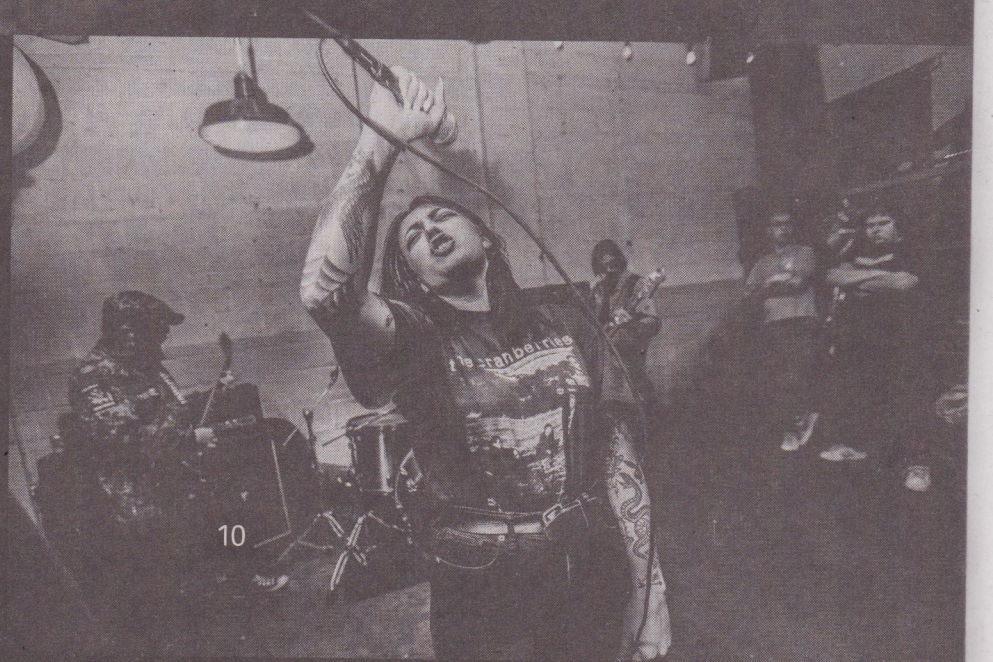

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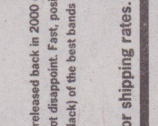

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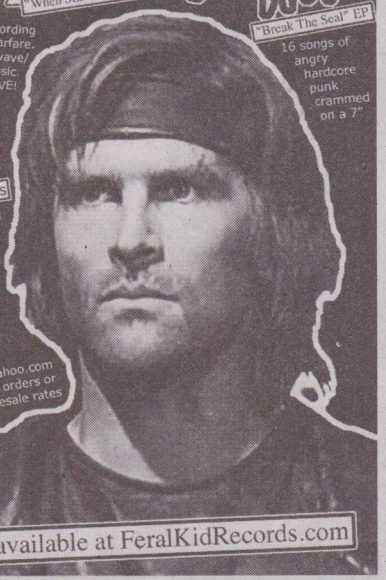

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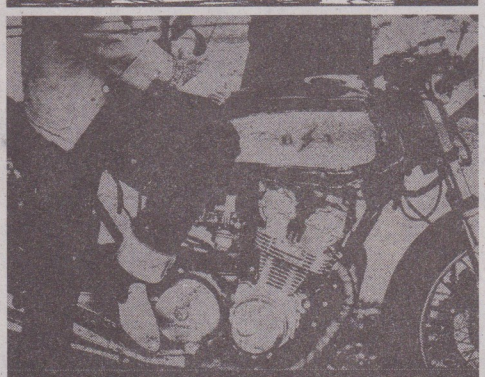

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Charmpit make joyous, pop-influenced punk music with surf elements and sixties girl group harmonies. They formed in south east London in the winter of 2015. What began as "a project to ward off the winter depression and fulfill a dream," soon gathered momentum when the trio signed up to perform the following spring at First Timers Fest (a weekend festival where every band billed is performing for the first time).

In the eighteen months since that initial foray into playing live, they've released two EPs (2016's Snorkel, self-released, and 2017's Jelly, on Keroleen Records), toured the UK, and all moved in together. We spoke to Charmpit about being "anarcuties," how the band functions as a space in which to explore their queer identities, the power of "femmeship" (femme-friendship), and why they advocate so strongly for anarcho-communism.

CHARMPIT

Interviewed by Estella Adeyer
Photos provided by Ant Adams, Claudia Moroni, Nina Pennick, and Joyce Smith

Band Members:
Anne Marie – bass guitar, vocals
Rhianydd – electric guitar, vocals
Alex – drums

MRR: What was your introduction to punk music and DIY scenes?

Anne Marie: My introduction to punk was 100% Josie and the Pussycats, nu-metal like Linkin Park, and pop punk like Blink-182. It needed to hit the mainstream for me to find it. I grew up in a very conservative suburb, and I was a femme so nobody was really trying to talk to me about politics. It first took having access to mainstream feminism to radicalize me, like the Spice Girls, Destiny's Child, Britney Spears, and then I connected with a lot of mainstream male angst. I definitely found that way before I found DIY bands...I'm grateful for those gateways.

Rhianydd: I was also consuming a lot of mainstream music, not so much heavy or hardcore stuff, but more indie music and specifically male indie voices. I think my interest in punk came much later, probably not until now honestly.

Anne Marie: But also you really got into DIY music in Oakland.

Rhianydd: Yeah the DIY scene that I discovered in Oakland / Berkeley in 2012 was bubbling; it was super exciting to me. I remember my friends and I idolizing a local band, Twin Steps, they were like local Oakland celebrities. Seeing that level of love for local artists was new to me. Realizing that people were making art for each other, and that that was a worthwhile thing to spend your time on even if you weren't necessarily going to make money or a career out of it...I was really blown away.

Anne Marie: I think the first DIY scene I found was the hardcore scene. I was in a conservative SoCal beach town, Huntington Beach, and it was rife with straightedge guys. I went to a Catholic School and the straightedge lifestyle suited us as we'd be randomly drug tested, so it was hard to do drugs. So I ended up in this straightedge hardcore scene, and I loved it. I have a lot of rage in me, and I needed to jump around and get that out, but I would be groped at every gig, and that was enough to kick me out of the scene *so* fast. I spent a good six months deep in the scene and then I left, not being able to put words or ideas to anything, not being able to explain why I left but just being like "I'm outta here." But mainly I've been listening to pop music my whole life. I'm really happy about that, because so many people who wasted their time being like "pop's not worthwhile" end up making pretty boring music. Whereas me and Rhianydd have been soaking up all types of pop from day one.

Rhianydd: I think it was down to my mom that I got a lot of pop knowledge from the '40s–'70s. So I already had a deep love for pop music and pop culture.

Anne Marie: Rhianydd sang in more folky projects in college. If we had solo projects then Rhianydd's would be folksy, and I would probably be in a hardcore band!

MRR: So you'd had some performing experience before Charmpit?

Rhianydd: Yeah but I'd never picked up an instrument. Well, I'd play guitar by myself but I'd always do just back up singing on stage.

Anne Marie: When I was writing my thesis in college I would do anything I could to procrastinate, so I just put my damn voice, and only my damn voice, on GarageBand, and stuck it up on SoundCloud. The songs I recorded were actually very folksy songs. What else can you do if you only have your fucking voice? But I've always had a very punk persona. So basically Rhianydd came to me with the idea of calling the band the Charmpits, and I was like...

Rhianydd: ..."it's not punk enough."

Anne Marie: Not punk enough. *Charmpit.*

Rhianydd: Yeah, that was my '60s girl pop vibe bringing that plural.

Anne Marie: But we're a good meld, because we do have enough similar tastes, we both have such a deep love for pop, and then also a very different eclectic knowledge around that.

MRR: What moment defined your political leanings?

Anne Marie: We've both always had a punk ethos from a young age.

Rhianydd: It took me a long time to sort out my feelings into thoughts, actions and politics. Because my parents are both quite liberal, and in the middle, but your dad would say "I'm an anarchist."

Anne Marie: Yeah, and then my mom's like a Trump supporting Republican. *[pauses]* They didn't last long...and my mom raised me. I first was politicized, like many people my age—I'm 27—by the Iraq War. That was my first proper time actually getting involved in organizing. And that was as part of some big, bullshit liberal thing. I was putting up banners around my school and organizing a bus to L.A. for the protests and stuff. And then... I mean, yeah, my dad did call himself an anarchist, but he's like Italian so it's nothing special! *[laughter]* Most Italian people will! But he's quite an individualist anarchist, and a lot of the people I would see calling themselves anarchists would be egotistical, violent males, and I wasn't interested in that. But, they were just shouting the loudest about their anarchism. So I was like "hmm, I don't know."

Then when I went to university and I read more about anarchist tactics and anarcho-communism, I thought to myself "this is everything I've been thinking about and wanting and doing since I was like, six," but now I have names for it, and understand that there's a community of people, and a struggle I could link up with. And that's how Rhi and I became close, through being involved in various direct actions and occupations in 2009. Obviously because it's America it's quite intense, and we've shared intense moments. I was shot with rubber bullets while Rhianydd had police dogs sicked on her—we've shared a lot of formative political moments together. It's been endless amounts of

times with me and Rhianydd up against a wall with police shouting in our faces and grabbing us; we have so many of those moments together, and that rage and experience...

One of the reasons we started Charmpit was because we were doing a lot of organizing, mainly with Sisters Uncut, Abortion Support Network and Anti Raids Network. We were just doing it all at once. It's a youthful thing, to put the whole fucking struggle on your shoulders. And we were just like, "whoa, we're never happy, this is terrible!" So Charmpit was a part of bringing joy back into our lives, it can feel like more of an individual hell than a shared, common experience that needs collective responses and solutions.

The older I get, and the more Rhi and I talk, the more I realize we've always been political, because we are femmes, queers, neurodivergent people, I'm a working class folk. We had to be political from day one for protection. You're not just political if you're in an organizing group. You're political if you're housing a friend who's fleeing domestic violence, right? Or standing in front of your neighbors door and putting your body on the line to refuse bailiffs entry. All of that adds up and feeds into political change. So we're political in our personal lives and also we like to organize collectively because we think together we're more powerful like that. You just feel more powerful around a lot of people,

what a safer space really means is a space where you're actually treated like a full human

and also selfishness into our lives a bit—doing something where we didn't know if it would click with other people or not, but we needed to do it for ourselves.

Rhianydd: I guess our songs aren't overtly...they don't spell out our politics, but I feel like our politics happen more between the songs. That's kind of on purpose, to keep it fun, to keep that in one part of our lives.

Anne Marie: The world is a giant struggle, and I feel like what a safer space really means is a space where you're actually treated like a full human, where no one is dehumanized, and where people are really able to fully be themselves. Obviously we should be thinking deeply about who is ignored outside of that space and putting those peoples' needs to the forefront, but it should also be a space where people can be more than their identities, be able to be their full human selves. So that's what we have Charmpit for—a space to fully be not women, not queer, but fully Anne Marie, fully Rhianydd, and what does that mean to us. So in that way it's super political.

Anne Marie: But I am really proud of us, I feel like so many bands of cis, white, middle class, straight men have their politics at the forefront of their songs, but they're not doing much action. But we're doing hella action! And we know how it's in our songs, and how every line has been influenced by our experiences, and what each line means to us and where it comes from, but it's not as overt because we're exhausted. I do talk about when we had our political moments, like the Iraq war and the financial crash, but also we were obviously political from a young age, like Rhianydd being in a very femme body, and me being working class. Most often, when you're working class, you have the state involved in your life from the beginning: the police, child services, all these different structures and institutions—you develop an early recognition of state violence, you see so much that other children are shielding from. But you don't understand it all, or have the words—in solidarity with each other. When we have to confront someone, just the two of us, it feels entirely different than when we're with a bunch of other feminists and we're confronting someone.

Rhianydd: All these things have expanded my idea of what's possible. First Timers expanded the idea of what's possible for myself, and organizing has expanded my idea of what's possible for the world. We can see the effect that we can have together, and the people we can make see us, who I didn't think we could reach before.

Anne Marie: It's interesting as a band how you pick your labels right? Because journalists want labels. And you also want to invite people in, kinda "do your yodel," call in the people with a similar yodel. So we push anarchists, and we like to say "anarcuties," you know make it more fun. And we push queer femmes. We couldn't find those scenes, those people, until much later in our lives, and

we know how much it would have benefited our lives to find them sooner. We found a lot of toxic anarchist scenes, and also a lot of toxic queer scenes, because as bi folk, we had a lot of people being biphobic. Anarchist is one we chose because we really believe in anarchist tactics and the power it has for oppressed people to work together collectively.

MRR: Are you still both involved in a lot of activism now?

Anne Marie: I think 2017 really rocked a lot of people. We noticed that we, and a lot of other organizers, went hard in a lot of ways and also retreated in a lot of ways. It was really shaky ground, I guess, everyone was kinda reeling. We needed to find a balance again, because I feel like we really didn't have good boundaries with our organizing in 2015–2016—it was full on all the time. And then with big hits like Brexit and Trump, we were like, "Fuck, if I'm doing this much work and it doesn't mean a damn, then what the hell?" But with some distance we can see that, for example, Sisters Uncut really brought domestic violence out of the shadows and into public consciousness and conversation in the UK, and the Ni Una Menos movement and now with #MeToo. All over the world things were happening, and now we see, after this really drudgy year, that all of that was building upon each other. But Rhianydd is always doing Abortion Support Network and Alex is always doing workplace union organizing stuff, and Sisters Uncut...In general, everyone was really drained, but now I feel like the energy is resurfacing again after the Holloway Prison Visitor's Centre occupation.

everyone has a busy life but we all can, and must, be involved in liberation in some way

Anne Marie: We don't spell out our politics in our songs, but we chat about it at gigs and on our social media. We're more likely to get involved in local struggles, like when our neighbors in the Ledbury Estate were stripped of their gas supply by the council. That's the kind of stuff we get involved with—local struggles—and we like to give a platform to the things that aren't already being widely talked about. And we know a lot of our fans are in south east London so we like to let them know about opportunities for getting involved locally.

When we tour we take different resources to give away, and we have dreams of building a traveling anarchist library. And what's really awesome is often, when we're on tour in the UK, we'll be chatting to someone for a while before realizing we actually already chatted before online through organizing an action or a skill share or something, and you really realize that there's a living, breathing radical femme and radical queer network. But shows are a place where we try to just fucking have *fun*. You chat afterwards or in between, but they're also about releasing. Thirty minutes to just exhale. We are all waiting to exhale, and we hope that our gigs and DIY gigs can be that. We all need that.

MRR: What does the impact of having a permanent base in south east London mean for Charmpit?

Anne Marie: Alex, our drummer, says south east London has always had a big punk scene and punk venues, even before DIY Space for London, like Birds Nest, New Cross Inn, it's always been a punky place. And he's lived in south east London since he was like three, he's like a "Brockley Boy."

Lewisham has a high amount of housing cooperatives. I was stuck in the countryside, in Essex, for a time because I don't have family financial support, I consider myself working class. So I couldn't move to London until I found out about these affordable housing cooperatives. I applied and got into one in Lewisham called Sanford Housing Co-operative, which I'd really recommend anyone looking for affordable housing in London to look into. And that was mega because there were so many things that I needed to be supported into making music: I needed First Timers Fest but I also needed cheap rent so I could have the time to straight up be frivolous with and make music, right? And also my housing co-op had a trailer to practice in so we never had to pay for practice and we recorded our first EP there. My anarchist politics brought me into circles where that knowledge was known and shared with me, about DIY Space for London and housing co-ops and stuff, but I was really lucky to land in south east London, it's really nurtured me and Rhi and I have been planting real roots here.

Alex has been organizing in south east London since he was 15, and he's 31 now. So he knows a lot of people, and a lot of the history of struggles in Lewisham. For example the Battle of Lewisham is a big reason why fascist groups haven't marched through Lewisham in decades. They've tried to, like they were in Croydon a few months ago, but they got shut down right away by local people / antifascists and they couldn't really move anywhere because they were penned in and protected by the police.

But there is this really radical history in Lewisham and we definitely treasure that and actively try to find out more about it. And we get involved in neighborhood things like Deptford Pride, which some of our friends started this year (though of course there's been queer people / history in Deptford, always), and Lewisham People's Day...we wanna be part of new histories that continue south east London's radical streak. We also want to play, not just to punks, but to everyone around town.

And now that we've all three built a home together in south east London, I feel like we're the most stable we've ever been. Our housing has ceased to be precarious, which is such a mega gift for our creativity. That's obviously a huge privilege, it means it's far less risky for us to focus on our music. We know many other DIY artists are living much more precarious lives in less stable spaces, we think about that often and what actions we can take to help and support those artists—including playing our part to make sure our home away from home, DIY Space for London, is a safer space to play and be for all DIY artists and gig goers.

MRR: Has living together made it easier to write together?

Rhianydd: I feel like, because we've spent a lot of time settling in, we've only just started being...like, just being. So we haven't worked out our routine for writing together yet. We're working on that!

Anne Marie: We write together to decompress—like how you would get together with a friend and chat shit, but we do that with guitars in our hands instead. Me and Rhianydd are precarious workers. Alex has a 9–5 career, but Rhianydd is a receptionist and I'm a nanny, so we're both on zero hours contracts. When we don't have any money / work we just stay inside and write. And again that comes with the privilege of not having an extortionate rent to pay.

Anne Marie: I feel like people don't talk enough about how difficult it is to come to music in adulthood. To not have those decades of being a stoner boy just getting to mess around. We're not parents or carers so we do have a bit of spare time, but it's really weird to become a musician as an adult and I do hope there are more conversations about that, because that totally is another dimension. Like when you're supposed to be getting your shit together, having a 9–5, starting a family, and we're like "we're starting a punk band."

MRR: Do you think that's something that you could look at with First Timers Fest?

Anne Marie: Definitely, one of the things we're trying to do [with First Timers] is to encourage adults to get into music. As an adult you need an outlet to destress, and music is such a beautiful one. And usually priority is given to children to motivate and support them into music, which is awesome, but one of the great things about First Timers Fest is that each year you hear people saying "I've been dreaming of playing music, starting a band, for 35 years!" But also we wanna have more young people involved, so that means outreaching to schools and stuff like that.

MRR: So you first went into First Timers Fest as a band, and now you're all involved in keeping it going. How do you facilitate its continuation?

Rhianydd: Well I feel like Anne Marie has a lot of the vision to do with outreach, and making it bigger and better. It was interesting to see the mechanisms of it—it is a lot of work, a lot of spreadsheets and press releases. But there's still patterns of people who participate so it's a case of trying to work out who's not there and why. Like we still have a fairly narrow age range, and it still attracts mainly members of the south east London punk scene, people who maybe weren't onstage but were attending the shows. And so now we're trying to expand it out from there.

Anne Marie: I think a lot of the organizing we do...I mean Rhianydd has pregnant people calling her like "I don't wanna be pregnant and I can't afford a way out of it," and that's fucking tough. So First Timers Fest by contrast is light-hearted and a lot of fun. It can be a personal revolution for people. And that does go out to a wider revolution too—people see bands like Big Joanie from First Timers 2014 and that fucking matters, they're part of decolonizing punk, not only through their music but also they help organize and run Decolonise Fest as part of the DIY Diaspora Punx collective. Out of all the organizing we do First Timers Fest is the most fun, because it's important to make music more inclusive, but it's not the same kind of direct life or death as some of our other organizing.

Rhianydd: It just produces joy.

Anne Marie: It is a lot of work, and obviously if we weren't doing it we'd probably have an album out already. So it is a sacrifice—as an adult you only have so much time, and then it's like, "Oh we're gonna be in a band, but we're also gonna help other people be in bands in quite a direct way" so it's a lot of work, but it's such a beautiful thing, the two-day festival is just so emotional—watching all these new bands that just needed some support and encouragement to form.

Rhianydd: That's my favorite part—that's the waitress in me, I don't like doing the organizing, I like showing up and catering to people. You're the seasoned organizer.

Anne Marie: And now that we're finding a balance, and we know

that we can't have the world on our shoulders—it's about empowering everyone to do a little bit of the work...because that's how you get revolution, right? Like everyone has a busy life but we all can, and must, be involved in liberation in some way. So now that we're older we're more focused on sharing knowledge and resources, so people know that they don't have to do everything on their own, and in fact that's quite impossible, and if we all do something, you know, many hands make for light work vibes. So we feel like we couldn't be in the DIY scene without being involved with First Timers Fest, it'd feel too selfish to do that after this scene has grown us so much.

MRR: What advice would you give to potential First Timers?

Rhianydd: One thing that keeps people from playing music is not having an instrument, when a lot of people will just have like a guitar in their attic. The bass and guitar that we use belongs to Alex. I think this is true partly because boys are given these things more. So if you have an instrument and you're not using it then offer it up to people; and if you don't have an instrument then go on Facebook or on the First Timers group and ask if someone has anything you can use.

Anne Marie: Some advice for First Timers is to not have expectations. I tell people about First Timers and to come, but it doesn't mean that you have to start a band, it could mean that you just do one bass workshop and you realize that "if I wanted to I could learn this instrument, but I don't want to," and even that is a really radical and powerful thing to understand, because then when you go see a band it's not like "how do they do that?" it's more like, "yeah I could do that if I cut some things out and made the time." So it should be a place to be exploratory and have fun.

Rhianydd: Think of it as a fun project.

Anne Marie: Yeah! And I do worry if it becomes a big thing that it might be some weird like scouting ground for like the one place to find a band that isn't all males, so everyone comes to find their tokens. But for now it's a really incredibly supportive space where, after the festival, other DIY bands just kinda naturally take it upon themselves to help First Timers who wanna continue to book their next gigs, record for free, etc. But also, some people perform at First Timers and never perform again, but what an incredible thing! They can now be like "I wrote music, I performed in front of 150 people, I did that once in my life." That's incredible. So I try to tell people that you don't have to become a *band*, just have fun.

MRR: How would you define anarchy and the tactics that appeal to you?

Rhianydd: Anarchism is the idea that we should replace capitalism and the state with a society run by workers and communities...In other words, communism but with added anti-authoritarianism! What this means day to day is a commitment to self-organization (as opposed to relying on leaders), horizontal organizing (as opposed to top-down / centralized organizing), solidarity, and direct action. There's a fair amount of crossover between anarchism and DIY ethics so we've found a comfy home in the London DIY punk scene.

Anne Marie: Anarchist tactics, like mutual aid, direct democracy, direct action—these are all human things that we do already, and anarchy makes sense to us because states everywhere are failing people, the third sector is blowing up, you have people crowd funding for their health. It's evident to us that it's people who help people, it's all of our everyday anti-capitalist actions that clean up capitalism's mess and destruction, the state doesn't do a lot for people, and it's an inherently violent institution.

anarchy makes sense to us because states everywhere are failing people, the third sector is blowing up, you have people crowd funding for their health

Anarchy, and anarchist tactics, happen around us every day. They're what we feel keep people surviving. It's more about naming these tactics and collectivizing it. For example, alternate ways people can organize themselves—organizing by consensus, non-hierarchical organizing, horizontal organizing. There's a quote we love from Rebecca Solnit about this, "Activists often speak as though we are starting from scratch, when often the real goal is to amplify the power and reach of existing alternatives. What we dream of is already present in the world." And I think it's important that we mention that we haven't read all the anarchist texts ever, you don't need to. We highlight that we're anarchist because there isn't much femme representation, but obviously what's much more important to us than the increasing number of people who call themselves anarchists is the growing use of direct action and anarchist tactics. For example, we've seen lots of stories in the past few years about people stopping their neighbors from being evicted by forming a human chain around their house. We don't know if they were anarchists—people can do that without calling it anarchist—but we feel like there is power in naming that what it is, direct action, because then it becomes a part of a wider conversation and struggle.

I also find it interesting that we never use the word feminist to describe our band.

Rhianydd: I guess because it seems so obvious?

Anne Marie: One because it seems obvious, and two because if we used that word right now we might get a lot of people that we don't want at our shows. Like liberal feminists who are just looking for a "riot grrrl show" because it's a buzzword right now... feminism completely devoid of politics or threat to capitalism. Because being a liberal, individualist feminist is the norm right now, it's being talked about enough, but we feel anarchism and being an anarcho-femme isn't being talked about enough. Like being anti-capitalist—the amount of feminist things you read where no one mentions capitalism! You can't be a feminist if you're not an anti-capitalist! I mean, I don't have many rules for what you need to be a feminist, but you legit can't be a feminist and not be anti-capitalist.

Rhianydd: I think we consider ourselves Lean-out feminists—hot term coined by Dawn Foster.

Anne Marie: Working class feminism is what we're about, so we're worried that if we adopt "feminist band" as a label we won't reach the people we wanna reach, but if we put anti-capitalist—we'll reach those people, or we'll bring more of something someone hasn't heard discussed before. We definitely realize too that our experience as queer femmes is just two types of experience, we love getting to hang out at shows and talk to others about shared and differing experiences and action.

MRR: We're still very much feeling the impact of the #MeToo campaign. It's made it painfully clear that no scene is safe from abuses of power, harassment, and assault. Does Charmpit play a role in facing up to these realities for you?

Rhianydd: We try to make sure Charmpit shows are usually spaces to feel somewhat safe from that.

Anne Marie: We prioritize playing venues that have a community accountability agreement and / or safer spaces policy—and "safer spaces" is important because no space is completely safe—or a good night out policy. When it was mainly our political friends coming to our gigs we felt like we didn't need to say much, because we were already in spaces that had those policies. But if we play a space outside of that, that's when we whip out "men to the back" or say if anything happens to you here feel free to talk to us afterwards, and that we have no problems stopping a show to address something.

Anne Marie: There was a show at DIY Space for London where afterwards I was looking hot, obviously, I had my stage garms on. And there was a guy who came up to me after the show who'd been heckling us during it, and we just kept shutting him down. And I think I was dancing, and he came up to me and was like "you have a nice ass."

Rhianydd: In a really lechy way, and then our friends were up in arms. And the DSFL volunteers spotted something was off, so they came over, asked what happened, asked if he knew about the accountability agreement, and the guy wasn't willing to back down.

Anne Marie: He was just like "oh but I'm a nice guy, you've got it all wrong!" He wasn't able to admit that he'd broken the community accountability agreement, so they did ask him to leave. It was amazing to know that I had that community support to deal with that situation.

Rhianydd: And I expect that at our shows.

Anne Marie: We don't really have loads of straight punk men coming to our shows, and I think part of that, again, is through not using feminist as a label. There are a lot of guys who wanna say they're a feminist and that they support feminist musicians, so they'll come. Some of them are honest, and some of them really aren't there in solidarity, they're there to get cookies. So I think mainly the people at our shows are queer people, even when we go around the UK, which I really rate. You know, we're both survivors, and it's been hard seeing this all come out and be in the mainstream—partly because we're like "why didn't you care before? Why are these 'perfect victims' the straw that broke the camel's back?"

Rhianydd: Someone said something I really liked, about how the #MeToo campaign is like annoyingly important, but now we're all dealing with the fallout of going through that moment. Its another important watershed moment, and it was important for a lot of people to be able to share, the fact that there is this domino effect toppling creepos is great. But our mental health kind of suffered. I deleted Facebook from my phone because I was just like "I can't deal with this in my thoughts every day!"

Anne Marie: It was a big reason why we didn't write for a while. So, if it's a space where the vibe isn't already in place we rant to hell and make it clear that it needs to be a safer space. We rate playing outside the scene to new people, usually when we do that we get lots of people who'll be like "I'm so happy to see femme guitarists, or to hear women songwriters focusing on the kind of content you write about, or love that the focus is that you're best friends." We don't expect a perfect politic from anyone, and we're well up for playing outside the scene, and I'm well up for causing a scene, we both are. But also, mostly, nobody gives a damn about us outside the scene. But if we do get asked to play a venue we'll ask if they have a safer spaces policy, if they have gender-neutral toilets, we'll do all that. But it's awesome if it's all already there for you.

MRR: How has Charmpit allowed you to explore your queer identities?

Rhianydd: For me, "Droolin' 4 U" is about a woman that I had a big crush on, and she was in a relationship so nothing ever happened,

but it was kinda about exploring the rush of having a crush.
Anne Marie: *[laughter]* You were *in love*. But you chatted about it with her, and now she's one of your closest friends.
Rhianydd: So now that relationship has changed, I mean I still love her so much just not in the same way. It was really fun to write a song about that while I was in the midst of it. That's kind of how we write, we'll just talk about what's on our minds and help each other. And if it's primarily happening to me then Anne Marie will kinda bring up memories of feeling something similar. But yeah Charmpit's often been about coming into our queer identity.
Anne Marie: Queer wasn't used a lot when we were in college. A lot of our friends were gay and lesbian, but being bisexual is just so confusing. I use bi because no one knows what it means, but they get it more than "I'm not straight" or all the other realms of things—we don't actually mean that we're only attracted to men or women. But we were definitely baby queers a few years ago. Meeting more bi people and queer people who weren't dismissive of us because we didn't only date other women was amazing. And learning more about how complex and nuanced it all is, and how there's still so many question marks regarding gender and sexuality.

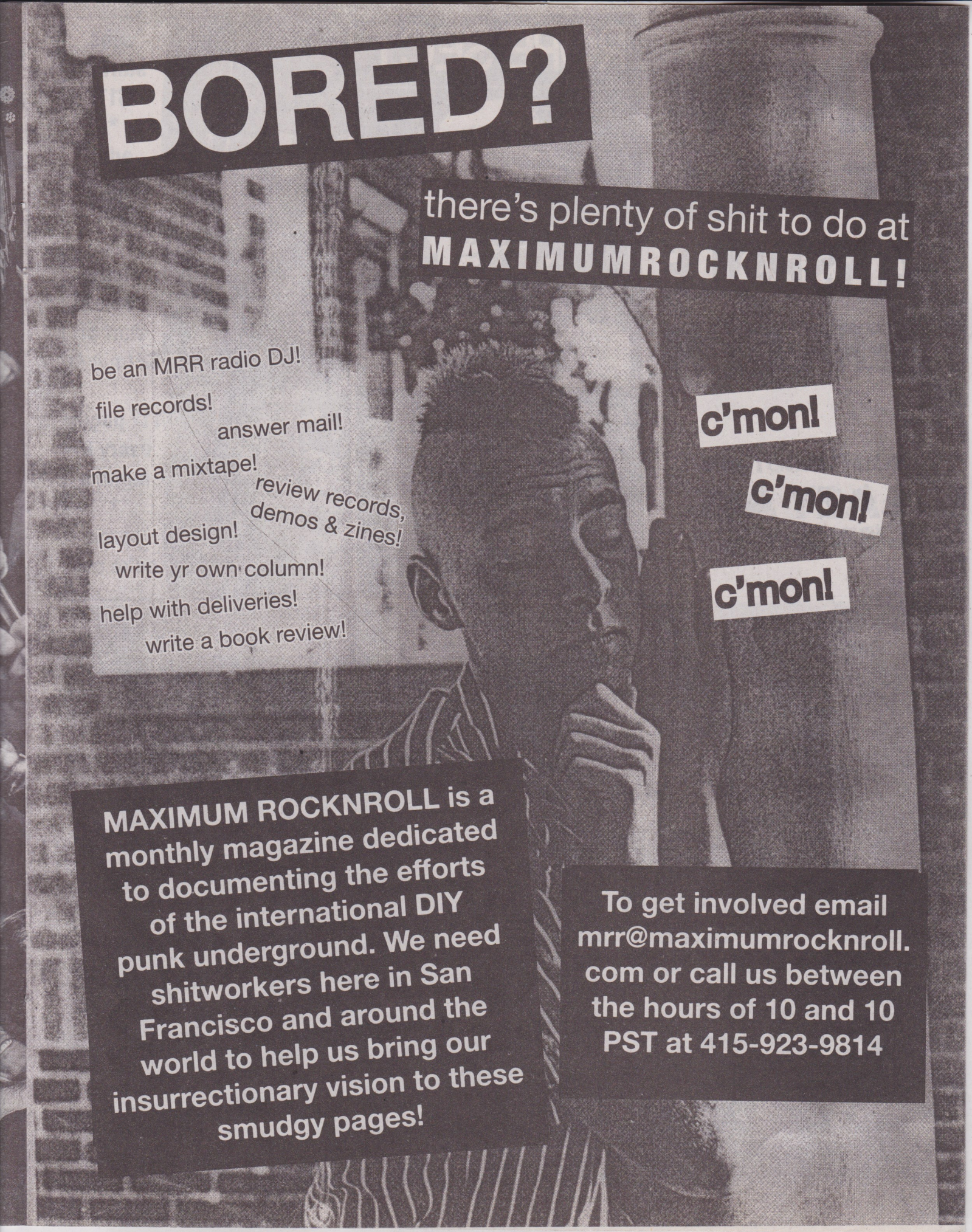
We've found a lot of power in femme-ness, that's been something that was expected of us, whereas now we've realized that it's a choice we're making for ourselves, to be femme.

I don't exactly connect with the word "woman" except that people read me as that and I've been told I am that. There's times when I would prefer to just be called Anne-Marie, but, speaking for both of us, at this point in our lives we've pretty much completely redefined what being a woman and being femme means to us. Also, I'm very lucky that my gender dysphoria stopped once I could stop my period. We've found a lot of power in femme-ness, that's been something that was expected of us, whereas now we've realized that it's a choice we're making for ourselves, to be femme.
Rhianydd: And Charmpit has been a big place to do that as well. Having the stage to go *big*.
Anne Marie: I did definitely dip into wearing all black for a lot of years of my life because I hoped it would make men not talk to me. I didn't want them to. Of course it didn't work fully, but men did talk to me less. It doesn't keep you safe, but I did realize a drop personally, so I kept it up. But at First Timers we femmed it the fuck up and bought these beautiful ponytail wigs down to our butts. And then I was doing a thing I normally do, which was walking in New Cross at 1am, and a guy pulled up beside me and was like "are you working tonight?" And I was like "I'm not working, I'm just walking," and it was fine he drove off, but I was like, "wow, I be who I wanna be truly, for one damn night, and here we are." And after that I was like "I'm never gonna stop dressing exactly how I want to in Charmpit and beyond."

Last week Rhianydd got harassed in her bathrobe inside our own home by a man who was delivering a package. And then the next day she got harassed after taking one step outside our house.
Rhianydd: By a dude in a Southwark Council car! So we got the license plate and emailed them, they said they told him to cut it out so that's something...
Anne Marie: But we do understand the ways that we're not always in jeopardy on the streets for being bi, especially if we're with someone who is being read as a man. But we also know that being made invisible constantly can be really oppressive. So through Charmpit we meet a lot of other queer people, and it's amazing to talk about the nuances of it all, and to know that in our community it's not just a black and white conversation, we rate that.

MRR: Which other DIY bands would you recommend?
Anne Marie: Kermes—they're from Leicester they are incredible. Mother Can You Hear Me— we used to have a joke that we made seasonal pop punk music, but they actually make seasonal pop punk music, so they release an EP every season. Fight Rosa Fight, Jesus and His Judgemental Father, The Potentials, Suggested Friends, Fresh, Milk Crimes. Obviously Big Joanie! And our favorites from First Timers Fest 2017 were Panic Pocket and Secret Power.
Rhianydd: Charla Fantasma 100%. They played at our EP launch and they were just so spine-tinglingly good.
Anne Marie: They're probably our fave band! Their music is pop rocks on your brain, and they look like they stepped out of Ghost World vibes, they're so cool. *And* Cat Apostrophe—we also used to have a joke that we made "punk pop-era" but we don't, Cat Apostrophe do— her operatic voice is beautiful.

Organizations CHARMPIT recommend checking out:
Anti Raids Network—antiraids.net
Abortion Support Network—asn.org.uk
Libcom—libcom.org
Sisters Uncut—sistersuncut.org
First Timers Fest—firsttimers.org
Decolonise Fest—decolonisefest.tumblr.com
Sanford Housing Co-operative—sanfordcoop.org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RASH

Interview by Rick Homuth
Photos by Zana Callahan and Carmelo Espanola

Chicago doesn't have many hardcore bands like Rash anymore. DIY punk acts are a mercurial bunch, often coming and going quickly, releasing a demo or EP and splitting up without breaking out of their specific niche in their specific scene. But the Chicago four-piece has managed to do so—due in no small part to the members' extensive punk pedigrees—releasing a steady stream of material since 2013, and playing a range of basements and venues more diverse than their few peers. Rash's music stems from something beyond a desire to reinvent the wheel, or even to rebel in a prototypical punk sense: it's tightly-wound, varied, and rock-fucking-solid music written by talented, experienced people, which is far more than a lot of bands can say in 2017. I sat down with Rash over breakfast the morning after a show to debrief them on recent performances and ask what was next.

MRR: So how'd you feel about the gig last night? Seemed like there were a lot of old heads there who were pretty into the young rockers.

Jim: That's what we're about.

Eric: Some guy asked me to hit him after our set.

Jim: Was that the dude that got bounced?

Skyler: It was.

Jim: He was too drunk and started push-moshing really hard. And some other older guy grabbed his glasses off his face? And then punched him? After that they kind of got in a fight, like a weird dad-fight. *[laughter]* It was very satisfying to see the dude get bounced.

Jesse: It's just not that crowd. Just a bunch of dudes banging their heads, not trying to mosh or anything.

Skyler: And he kept yelling everyone's band name. *[laughter]*

Eric: He came up to me and was like, "*Rash fucking kills! Hit me!*" I'd never seen that guy before in my life.

Jim: You don't say. He hasn't been at Albion House? *[laughter]*

MRR: On that note: one of the interesting things about you guys is that you're one of the only bands in Chicago I can think of that will play a DIY venue like Albion House one night, and then turn around to play Reggie's or an Empty Bottle gig like the one last night.

Jesse: Reggie's was a one-off. We won't be playing there again.

Skyler: We'll play the Bottle one or two times out of the year, but mainly it's house gigs.

MRR: But those shows exist, is my point. And I just think that's an interesting thing, when bands can pull that off. Punk as a genre is, I think, very flexible, but there are some hardcore bands that wouldn't transfer well to a venue, and some that wouldn't make the cut in the DIY scene.
Jim: I think we try to play shows just so we can meet different types of people, honestly. Otherwise we definitely wouldn't have played that Reggie's show with Doom.
Eric: That Reggie's show was super weird. Super smelly. It was a Doom show after all. Lots of dreadlocks. The next day I saw people panhandling in Wicker Park that had been at the gig.
Jim: Because that show was probably like twenty bucks.
Eric: So people getting off the train in Wicker Park paid for those oogles to go to that show. *[laughter]*
Skyler: We should've made Rash butt flaps. We would've made a killing.

MRR: How'd you guys end up on that show?
Skyler: Jesse and I are really big fans of Today is the Day. They play weird venues every once in awhile, and they were coming through Reggie's. I messaged the promoter and was like, "Yo, I see that there's potentially one more spot for a local band to play?" He was like, "Ah, the show's already filled up, *but* I was trying to get ahold of you! It's so crazy you decided to email me this week, because I was just about to email you!" And I was like, "Really? I've never met you before in my life." *[laughter]* Then eventually I asked him why and was like, "Why do you want us? We're not like any of those other bands. We're not like Doom. We *definitely* don't sound like the other opening band." And he said, "Eh, I wanted a hardcore band on the show."
Eric: Yeah, and that opener was *rough*.
Skyler: *And* we didn't even open!
Jim: We were "direct supporters."
Eric: The opener was a crust band from Chicago from the early '90s.
Jim: But they don't have...recordings? They do have a new *CD* . Someone was like, "Hey you're in Rash? Great! Do you want a CD?" I said, "Uh, yeah, sure, alright." And she went, "Cool! It's only ten bucks!" *[laughter]* "Nah, I'm good." They did give me a patch. They decided that was okay for me to have for free.

MRR: Overall, do you think you play more of those shows, or what? And why is that?
Skyler: We've played with a fair amount of older bands and bands in "our bracket." When we first started we played with a bunch of new bands—Gag, Glue, stuff like that.
Jesse: We're not a band that gets out of Chicago all the time, so playing the same venues with the same bands all the time gets really old really fast.
Skyler: When we get asked to play a weird oddball show that we don't really fit into, we jump on the chance. Hopefully the people at those shows will come out again.

MRR: Is that how the Rash punch cards started?
Eric: It was kind of a joke. Someone at a show said they were a "Rashoholic," and one day when I was really bored at home I made "Rashoholics Anonymous" cards. They're these punch cards that say "Rashoholics Anonymous," and every time you come to a show you get a punch, and once you get eight punches you get a prize.
Skyler: You get a punch for every purchase, too. As ludicrous as it is, I carry mine in my wallet.
Jim: Do you even have any punches on yours?
Skyler: Uh, no.
Eric: Skyler's been to every show and doesn't have a single punch yet.
Skyler: I'm not a true Rashoholic.
Eric: We haven't figured out what the prize is gonna be yet.

MRR: And I'm sure the people that rack up the punches also buy the tapes and book more shows.
Eric: That's always the hope.
Jim: *[To Skyler]* You're very enterprising, too. You're always like, "Yeah, I'll just email 'em and see what they say." I've never thought to do that in bands.
Skyler: It doesn't matter, because I'm not afraid for someone to be like, "Uh, no, I don't think so. but I'll see you at the show!"

MRR: Have there been any notable rejections? Shows you really wanted to play that you just didn't get on?
Jesse: The Jesus Lizard.
Skyler: That was me. I asked. *[laughter]* I said, "Hey, I noticed the Jesus Lizard doesn't have an opener! You want a no-name band from this city to play this show?
Jim: Yeah, but what band *should* play with the Jesus Lizard, rather than some no-name band, y'know? I feel like that's perfect. That'd be a cool thing to do for smaller bands, though. If they thought, "Hey, this show's gonna sell out no matter what the opener is. We should put a cool local on it."
Skyler: That's *us*, man! *[laughter]*

MRR: Where was that show?
Skyler: The Metro. And we've never played the Metro. We don't exactly need to, but that's the one time I think it would be appropriate. *[laughter]* With the Jesus Lizard.
Eric: That would be weird, playing that big of a venue. Reggie's was a similar sense of anxiety, though, so who knows.
Jim: I think the Metro stage might be smaller than the Reggie's stage. It's not that big. It looks bigger than it is. Reggie's felt really weird.

MRR: When did you play the Metro?
Jim: I played it with Boilerman, in like 2012 or something. It was us, the Sidekicks, Banner Pilot, and the Lawrence Arms.

MRR: What was that like?
Jim: It was weird, but cool. They were nice enough to not make us price match merch, which is something I'd never considered.
Skyler: How'd you get out so lucky?
Jim: Cuz we're nice young fellas. *[laughter]* They took pity on us.
Skyler: Another thing is, when we play clubs—like, *club* clubs—it's tough because we don't have the longest set. Clubs want you to play for a long time, at least half an hour. At most we play twenty minutes. Last night people were like, "Man, cool show! Wish you guys played longer!"
Jim: That means it worked though! Instead of "that band played for too long," which is the worst *ever.* If they want us to play longer, then I feel like we've succeeded. Because maybe they'll want to come see us again, and then next time we'll play a different set, because we *can* play a full set of our best songs and still have plenty of material leftover. Also, I *get tired.*
Eric: And I can only do so much with the microphone. It's heavy. We have to play until it breaks.

MRR: Have you ever broken a microphone?
Eric: About ten. Three in the last two months.
Jim: How many on tour? Two?
Eric: I broke three on tour. I owned four, and had them all repaired before tour just in case.
Jim: Turns out it was a good move.

MRR: How long ago was the tour? Not too long, right?
Skyler: Early October, yeah.

MRR: And how long was the tour?
Eric: Six cities, seven days. Cleveland, New York City, Boston, New Haven, Philadelphia, Indianapolis—
Skyler: Our DC show fell through.
Eric: The day before! We got to Philadelphia and the guy doing our show in DC told us the venue had double-booked and we couldn't play that spot because it was a private event. The people who were playing there were paying to play. They wouldn't let us hop on.
Jim: Instead we drove for seven hours, which was a good choice.

MRR: Where'd you play in Boston?
Eric: It was this bar called, like, O'Brien's?

MRR: An Irish pub?
Eric: An Irish pub.
Skyler: The bartender was killing me. After we played I went to the bar and ordered a beer and a shot. Half the crowd there was straightedge, so he looked really bored all night. So I asked him for a PBR and a shot of whiskey and he was like, "Ahh! A boilermaker! That's the house special!" *[laughter]* I was like, "I'm pretty sure that's the house special everywhere but OK."
Eric: *"You must be local."* That show was weird. We played with a straightedge youth crew band, which was fun.

MRR: A good one?
Jim: Well... *[laughter]*
Skyler: It was a first for our band. Out of all the bands we've played with, here or on tour, we've never played with a straightedge youth crew band. It only took us going to Boston.
Jim: They were young. They were...good?
Jesse: The dude who was running the show was on top of his shit. He was all about making sure it was running on time, and everything was cool, and all that.
Jim: It was a five band show but the fastest one we played.
Skyler: We finally found people who were organized.

MRR: I very much see Rash as a band that's not as into the bullshit anymore. Is that true?
Jesse: Sometimes it can be a nightmare. We played a fest recently.
Eric: Ugh, Peoria.
Jesse: It was so unbelievably poorly planned.
Jim: We all wanted to die.
Jesse: It was really rough. So you have times like that when it's really frustrating, especially since we traveled a ways to get there. It's just an important part of throwing a show to do your part and make sure it's running correctly.
Eric: This was a fest where we played two hours later than we were supposed to. Maybe even later.
Jesse: To two people. The only reason we stayed to play is because they drove a ways to see us.
Eric: And we were borrowing gear from people, so those people were trapped there, too.
Skyler: I tried to tell the dude, too. I said, "Hey, can we just play after that band? Because most of the people we know who are playing are all playing together. And we're sharing gear and have been here for *eight hours!*"
Jim: There were *two* 45 minute breaks where no bands played. There were two sound people, one of them just *left!*
Jesse: They also made us move our gear, like, four separate times from stage to stage. We just bounced back and forth.
Eric: The guy who set up the show didn't even watch our set. He didn't even talk to me until we were leaving. He ignored me the entire show and then came up to me and was like, "Hey man, I got 15 bucks for you!" I should've told him to keep the money.
Jim: We've all booked shows, too, so it's like—we all know it's not *that* hard. It takes a pretty minimal amount of effort to not do a bad job running a show.

MRR: How did you playing that fest happen?
Eric: This kid just messaged me on Facebook.
Jim: The year before, the fest looked really great. The year before, it looked more appealing. We figured it'd be cool. And that was very much not the case.

MRR: What was the name of the fest?
Eric: Discontent Fest.
Skyler: Puttin' 'em on blast.
Eric: I don't care.

Skyler: *[laughter]* Listen, this fest is gonna burn to the ground, starting with us. We like it when shit runs smoothly. We've also gotten good at not playing too much, because I think for a second we were playing too often. When people start to notice that you're a stable outfit in Chicago, all of the sudden it's, "Do you want to play *this* show? Do you want to play *this* show?" And if we're accepting two out of three, it's too much. We played downstairs at Subterranean twice within three weeks. We know that even our friends don't want to see us *that* much. *[laughter]*
Eric: Now we're gonna take a little break so we can write a new record. We've been playing the same songs for like three years, because our LP took over a year to come out.

MRR: Tell me about the new LP. What's different this time?
Jesse: We're taking a slightly different approach—or trying to. We're writing it as one continuous thing, and each song will go into one another. To write it in order, rather than just a collection of a bunch of songs in random orders that work. No concept, we're trying to write a body of work that works well together.
Jim: The first LP has a song from the demo on it, then three songs that we recorded that ended up on a tape that was *supposed* to be on a 7". Just all these things that were supposed to be other things. One of the songs on it we wrote within the first month of being a band! It was just not representative of one sound.
Skyler: It was a culmination of accumulating all these songs. Now we don't sound the same as we did on the demo. We don't play anything off that anymore because we don't sound like it at all. That's the case on the LP, too, that we don't sound as much like that anymore. We're trying to look at songwriting differently.
Eric: It's not a rock opera.
Skyler: It's a Rash opera. We've got so used to just writing music, because we weren't playing a ton of shows. Now we are, and we're trying to do less of that and just practice for the new record.
Eric: The songs on the split are fairly new.
Jim: All the 7" stuff is pretty new. That stuff came out pretty fast after we recorded it.

MRR: Yeah, tell me about the split record with C.H.E.W. and how that came about.
Skyler: We played with them a while ago at some weird party, and before that I'd kept hearing about them.
Jim: I heard their demo and was impressed. Then I saw them and was like, "Well, this is the best band I've ever seen."
Skyler: We both felt the same way, like, "They're like our Chicago counterparts. They sound like hardcore, but also aren't straight, heavy hardcore." We were all mutually stoked on each other. Then, boom, the split actually happened. Splits are weird, some people don't like buying them. But I'm really proud of it, because I love their band, I love the songs we did, and the artwork is sick.
Jim: Neither band phoned it in either, which for a lot of bands ends up happening with splits. Like, "We had these two extra songs, we'll just put those on there with a cover, or whatever." But their songs on the split are insane.
Eric: It took us forever to record our songs because we wanted to write something as good as C.H.E.W.
Skyler: They tour more than us, too. But we try to play places most people aren't as willing to go to. Like Champaign, for example, or Springfield.

MRR: And is that usually a fruitful experience, as a band?
Skyler: It can be. If people come out. Like, when we played Iowa City— that was one of my favorite shows. That can easily be just as fun as playing a big show in a big city.
Jim: It's nice to places where just having a show is enough to bring people out. When it's not like in Chicago where there's six shows on any given night you could go to. You get show fatigue. It's cool to play shows where it's "the thing" that's happening.

MRR: What are your lyrics usually about?
Eric: Pretty much whatever I'm feeling at the moment.
Skyler: Eric works a lot so he sings about work a lot.
Jesse: And all the other stuff people usually sing about. Heartbreak, etc.
Eric: Heartbreak. Awful people I work with. People I really dislike.
Jim: We don't really have any political songs, do we?
Eric: We have one. "Bleeding Pigs" off the split with C.H.E.W. It's not really about cops, more politicians. A lot of it's Chicago-centered, because Chicago's very corrupt as a political city.
Skyler: And it has been. That's why it's called the Windy City.

MRR: So you're calling out Rahm Emanuel too?
Eric: Rahm, I hate you.
Jim: You're the worst. You weasel-faced idiot.
Eric: I wish you'd choke on that saxophone.

MRR: Rahm Emanuel plays the saxophone?
Jim: He used to practice at our practice space!
Eric: Not our exact space, but the same building. When he first got elected it was almost like an open town hall thing.

Jim: "Come talk to me in my jam space."
Eric: Yeah, and he'd supposedly just be in there rippin' on the sax waiting for people to stop by.
Jim: Miserable idiot.
Eric: The only thing I do respect that he's ever done—the only reason he got re-elected was because no one really ran against him. Chuy Garcia was the closest, but didn't run a great campaign. And after he got elected again, people wanted him to resign after the Laquan McDonald shooting. It came out that he'd known about the police shooting for a year. But he was like, "You guys re-elected me, so I'm not going anywhere." That's bold. *[laughter]* And he literally wants to privatize everything in the city. They already did it with parking, and that already shows it doesn't work.
Jesse: My favorite one was when the price of public transportation went up—*again*—and his response was, "Well, buy a car." *[laughter]* "Don't like it? Just buy a car."
Eric: I was so happy when they announced the Star Wars museum wasn't coming to Chicago. Because he was so visibly upset about it. And that was the only reason I didn't want it here, was because I knew how badly he wanted it.
Jim: Just put it in Wisconsin so you can still go to it easily, but it still bums out Rahm. *[laughter]*
Eric: George Lucas, this is a call out. Don't come to my city. Unless you're making a movie and want me to work on it. *[laughter]*
Jim: He doesn't even make movies anymore!
Eric: This is Trump's America.

MRR: What's the state of punk rock in Trump's America?
Skyler: "Oh, at least punk bands will be good!" Like, no, come on, punk bands have already been good.
Eric: Punk will always be good.
Skyler: If it's not Reagan, if it's not Bush, it's gonna be someone. It doesn't matter.
Eric: There were even people who disagreed with Obama.
Jim: It's the same as it was before he was elected.
Eric: There's more at stake for people who aren't from America.
Jim: Or who are from America, and aren't straight white dudes.
Skyler: I think it's great, though, that punk has been more different as a result. There's been more brown bands coming out, and more bands with trans people. I'm originally from Indiana, where there wasn't always a ton of that. So it's nice to see things have been improving.
Jesse: I don't think it's anything new that's been happening, but definitely a surge lately of outspoken people.
Skyler: It's awesome because it's just happening. You don't need to be like, "you know we really *do* need some trans bands, or some people of color," or whatever. It's just happened naturally. When we played in Philly, all of the other drummers were women. I was the only "dude" drummer. It's awesome that everyone wants to freakin' *rock*.
Eric: There have definitely been a lot more benefit shows, and reasons to have all-local shows that put money somewhere else than just the bands.
Skyler: Last night was just a straight-up rock gig, it wasn't like that. But they definitely have stuff like that at the Empty Bottle sometimes, but it's been awesome seeing the amount of DIY benefit shows too. That gig for Puerto Rico that Jim played with Raw Nerve a few nights ago was great. It was actually really heavy when one of the hosts got on the phone with his dad. I was just trying to imagine what it'd be like if that was my dad. Like, my family's three hours away in the Midwest, and a lot of other people's parents aren't. Our president just says the dumbest shit, man. Calling up the wife of a dead soldier and saying, "Well, he knew what he signed up for." Who says that? That's like someone's drunk uncle saying that shit at someone's funeral. Dude has no tact.
Eric: This is a call-out, Donald Trump.
Skyler: No hole punches for you.

MRR: Can say more about the benefit for Puerto Rico that you played the other night?
Jim: The show was a joint benefit for the hurricane relief in Puerto Rico and a benefit for this person JT who was detained by ICE, for their legal fund. A bunch of teenagers played first, with some hip-hop thing. Then a couple local bands, then Raw Nerve. The whole point of the thing was to raise a bunch of money, so the dudes from Raw Nerve got in touch with me to play guitar in place of their old guitarist who got called out for some very miserable behavior and being a terrible, terrible human being. I'd been close with them for a while; I drove them on tour and stuff. Niko Zaglaras, the other guitarist, even flew out from Los Angeles. I think he was here for literally 23 hours or something. He got here at like five in the morning, then we practiced for like an hour and a half, or two hours. That was it. During the show, he, Joey and I went into Joey's car and had a car run-through of the set. *[laughter]* He played drums on his steering wheel, and Niko and I played our guitars along. Then Niko flew out on the red eye back I think, very early in the morning. It was really fun, and they raised a ton of money, which was really nice. Something like $2,000.

Skyler: I didn't realize what the gig was really about until I got there. I thought, "Oh, I love Raw Nerve, I'd better go." My old band, Picked Clean from Indianapolis, played with them a ton. That's how I met Jim and Eric before I moved to Chicago
Jim: It was a great vibe—people made food and sold it for the benefit, some people made posters, others brought stuff to sell and donate the money from that. There were even tattoo raffles.
Skyler: It was just the community at work.

MRR: Raw Nerve songs aren't something you can just "pick up" and learn easily. It's not simple music like a lot of hardcore is. So what was that like?
Eric: Well, Niko's not human...
Jim: You'd think that, but it's pretty simple stuff. There are some that are really complicated and weird, but a lot of them are only twenty seconds long.
Skyler: That band will always be one of my favorites. It was the time and place. Since their last shows were incredible back years ago, it was like they didn't skip a beat this time around. It was just like it used to sound.

MRR: How old is everyone?
Jim: I'm 30.
Eric: I'm 29.
Jesse: 31.
Skyler: 28.

MRR: So, up there.
Jesse: "Up there." *[laughter]*
Skyler: Does that make people like Ebro and Martín from Los Crudos grandpas or something?
Jim: They're the walking dead.
Skyler: I don't know about all the old guys, but the people in bands that I like a lot have always been really cool. Kirk from MK-ULTRA and Sick/Tired, Ebro, Martín...they're always super cool. They still go to shows. Not every show, but they're not "too cool" for it. They're still weird punk dudes just like us. That was one thing that really made me stoked, and made me want to keep coming to shows. Chicago holds that down pretty hard.
Jim: And they're all still good! There are plenty of "old guy" bands that are just *bad*.
Skyler: When we played with Los Crudos and MK-ULTRA, Ebro double-gigged. I've done that too, and I know it's tough.
Jim: If you watch Los Crudos videos from the '90s compared to now, they're as good, if not better, now than they were then. Martín's such a good front person, it's absurd.
Skyler: That new Limp Wrist that came out is fantastic. Even though we don't sound like bands like that, we're still stoked to see it's still happening.

MRR: Chicago's not like New York City in that you won't see someone like Harley Flanagan or Roger Miret show up at a gig like they're larger than life. There are some super influential punk bands from Chicago, but everything feels much more down to earth.
Eric: This is Chicago, Not L.A. The Midwest has a very specific sound, very different from the coasts.
Skyler: I will say—seeing Springa from SSD walking around makes me not want to play anymore at this age.
Jim: You gotta know when you don't have it anymore. Seeing Poison Idea was just *very bad*. They just can't do it anymore. You have to be self-aware enough to be like, "You know what? Maybe that's it." No one says you have to do it.
Skyler: Like, we played with Cherubs last night, and it's not like they're an *old* old band—they played in the '90s—but they knew how to do it when they came back.

MRR: Rash as a band are big fans of breakfast, so I want to end with this: where's the best breakfast in Chicago overall, and for a touring band?
Eric: Café Marie-Jeanne, my favorite.
Jim: Flying Saucer's good. It's only two days a week, but I'd say Ground Control has the best in Chicago.
Skyler: Handlebar, too. I'm not vegetarian but I love all their food.
Eric: If you're a band on tour, don't go to the Chicago Diner. There are better places.
Jim: I agree. I don't like going there, but the best french toast in Chicago is the vegan french toast at Pick Me Up Café in Wrigleyville. I hate going to that neighborhood, trying to park there sucks, but it's great.
Skyler: Just so the people know: any bands out there that need breakfast in Chicago, we'll show you the spots.
Eric: Rash brunchcore. That's us.

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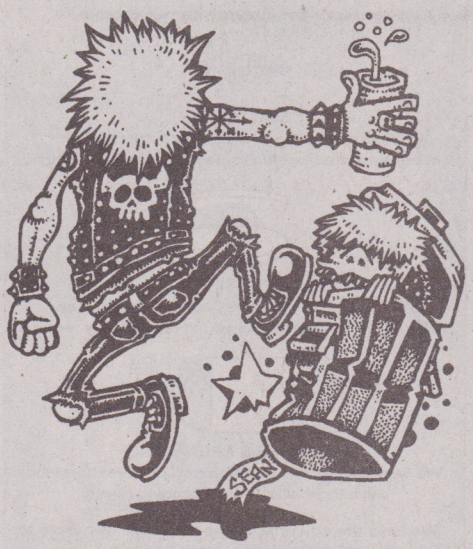

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ISO TOPE SOAP

The future of our nightmares might already be upon us. Is it possible that countless dystopian visions is a mild breeze compared to the everyday suffering of modern society? Androids may dream of electric sheep, but they still awake in a brave new world. Or do they? Facing the re-energized threat of nuclear war. Nazis marching on the streets. Terrorists running wild. Cyber bullies spreading their cancer. Millions and yet millions starving while the elite revel in bottomless greed and luxury.

Operating in the same musical context as predecessors like Geza X, Devo, Ism, Koro, and the Screamers and propelling it into this day and age, Peter Swedenhammar and his brainchild Isotope Soap have created the perfect soundtrack to the paranoid reality we live in.

Introduction / interview by Marko Gillingsmark
Photos by Marcus Wilen and Ia Hammar

MRR: You've been active in the punk scene since the late '70s, always looking forward or at least sideways, avoiding the hollow-eyed celebration of glorious days long gone. What drew you to punk rock in the first place? Why do you think so many old punks settle with safe nostalgia and a few choice records from their youth, ignoring everything that's been going on since?

A hot summer day in 1977 my mother yelled at me to come in and watch those crazy people on TV. It was a clip about the new thing called punk rock. It totally floored me as a nine-year-old bullied fat kid. What stuck in memory is this girl with a big note or something similar on her head. It was outrageous. I laughed and I fell in love. This was *it*. Before that I was a huge Kiss fan and had my whole room plastered with Kiss posters. Also bands like Sweet, Rush, Angel, AC/DC, Starz, Ted Nugent, Queen, Deep Purple, and some electronic music I've taped from my father when visiting him like War of the Worlds and Tomita. But out they went, (except Sweet, Queen, and Rush, which I still love) and in came punk. The day after the TV clip I went down to a local record shop and bought *God Save the Queen*. Punk was perfect for a bullied kid like me. All of a sudden I felt a kinship with those misfits called punks. You didn't have to be macho. You could be silly. To use a cliché it felt like I could be myself. Finally! However, this is an something I realized afterward, because I doubt I thought about it in such terms at the time.

It seems common for people in general to get stuck in nostalgia as they get older. Well, if that suits them and they feel happy, then go ahead. I find it utterly boring, especially for old punks, as one of the formulas of punk was anti-nostalgia. It's a "rule" I still cherish. They've become what they once hated namely "*raggare*", those teddy boys back in the '70s that beat up punks, listened to '50s rock'n'roll and drove old American cars. I mean everything is just a click away if you want to discover new stuff. With that said I mostly try to discover old stuff I missed in the first place, since I find it to be the most inspirational. But I don't long for those days that went by, there's still so much stuff to do and explore.

MRR: Isotope Soap is in many way a natural continuation of your previous project, the weirdo hardcore band Pusrad. It has the same arty, start / stop agenda, while also adding influences from the synth damaged bands of the late '70s and early '80s. How come you entered into these musical domains?

Growing up with punk in the 70s, synthesizers were a natural element in many bands that I liked: Ultravox (who were among the first bands I discovered when they aired a live show with them on Swedish telly in the autumn of 1977), Stranglers, Devo, and XTC. Bands like X-Ray Spex, among others used saxophone. So it was natural that odd instrumentation were a part of punk. When I met my compadre Packe in 1983, whom I started Raped Teenagers with, the journey into arty weirdo territory started for real. Both of us had the exact same taste when it came to music and a newfound fascination for the number one enemy of punk rock, namely the progressive rock from the early '70s and Rock in Opposition (RIO) bands like Univers Zero and Present. We also had a growing industrial / synth scene in our hometown of Linköping, Sweden, which of course were

started by the '70s punks who grew tired of the strict rules of punk.

When we started Pusrad in 2010 we had the goal to add synth to our hardcore sound, but we never did. So Isotope Soap became a natural continuation of Pusrad when we ended in 2015. Why synths? I wanted to do something I've always been intrigued by and that I knew very little about. And it was a real kick in the butt. It felt fresh. Like when I started with punk as a youngster. Last time I was this inspired must've been when I started playing music in the first place. To do something I'm not good at doing. No rules. Just play. Have fun.

MRR: The main ambition of many new bands seem be fitting into this or that retro sound of their choice. You on the other hand have always seemed more interested in pushing the boundaries. Maybe not inventing the wheel cause it's way too late for a stunt like that, but still adding your own flavor to the mix. Probably more of a statement than a pure question, you got any comments on this?

It's not that I force myself to do something that *must* sound odd or weird. It's just what I like. It could be simple and easy sounding too, but it has to have that important ingredient of "feeling" if you know what I mean. I've always had the urge to do something that don't sound too much like the bands that I love. I can understand why people fall into the trap of sounding like their heroes because they want to sound like the music they listen to. But I just feel bored doing that. I want to create something that doesn't sound too much like this or that band. It's more fun that way and to use some rather pretentious words it feels more "honest" and "real." And I like to fuck with the punk formula about how things shall be too. It's fun to annoy people and myself. Especially rigid thinking punks.

MRR: As a lifer who has followed punk in its many phases and disguises, how would you say it fits into this day and age? What I'm trying to ask is if punk is dead yet? Just kidding of course, but still, does it make a change outside of the insider's view so to speak?

The change it can make and still makes is that it can feel easy to pick up an instrument. On the other hand, as a parent, talking to other parents, youngster seems more interested in playing computer games. And if that's where they find themselves why not. Everything has to die someday. Punk is not the counterculture it used to be but can still be a good political and musical outlet for those who feel the urge. With that said I'm not the right person to talk about how punk is perceived today among young people. I'm not in the middle of it.. I try to go to shows and I always keep an eye and an ear out for new bands. When it comes to Sweden it feels as strict as it always been for punk. You either play "D-beat," "noise," or "hardcore". I wish it appeared more fresh like the current US trend from Total Punk and Lumpy. That to me feels like *real* punk. *[laughter]* No rules, weird, curious and mind bending.

MRR: A while ago I talked to this cliché, studded leather jacket wearing, tough guy punk dude and said I really liked Isotope Soap. His reaction was something like "Fuck that! Raped Teenagers were so good, but now it's some hipster synth bullshit." I find it pretty hilarious that an instrument like the synthesizer still can create such strong reactions. It's been around forever at this point. Why do you think people find it to be such a horrendous instrument, and think of it as destroying the pureness of the beloved punk culture?

Wonderful. I guess he's as old as me and still he reacts the same way people did in the '80s regarding Raped Teenagers using violin and organ. That didn't serve the punks very well. We also had Yes (the prog rock band) logos on our jackets and shirts. It was easy then and easy still to punk the punks.

Yeah, why do synths upset people? Maybe because there's so many knobs? They feel you have to be smart to use it? I don't know. In many ways synths are the ultimate punk instrument. You just turn a knob and push your finger on a keyboard. What's not to love? Remember that ad from 1970 with Suicide saying they play punk? Punk rock actually has to be played with synths! *[laughter]*

MRR: If I'm correct you did your first live show totally solo, but now you have a steady live line up consisting of Herr Bollionär, Ruben Flobecker and Jan Erik. How did you hook up with those scoundrels and can you tell us a little about their previous whereabouts?

Yes, our first show was solo. Isotope Soap wasn't meant to be a live band first. But then we just got requests for more and more gigs. Those in the band are people I've known for some time here in Stockholm like our guitarist Herr Bollionär who played in Neu-Ronz with me as well as Nitad. The same goes for our modular synth player Jan-Erik who sang in Neu-Ronz and Regulations. Our Arp Odyssey player Ruben Flobecker is a guy I've seen around my hoods for many years. All of a sudden he popped up on our second show in May 2017. Then he showed up on some more shows and said he could play the synth if we wanted. So he joined us in September 2017. He hasn't played in any

known bands before but keep an eye out for his soon to be released solo project J.Ö.S. They're all great guys and easygoing.

MRR: Where would you say Isotope Soap fit into the contemporary punk universe? In a Swedish context I don't think you belong to any scene, which is something I really appreciate. I've always liked the bands and artists that are their own masters. The lone wolf. The pale rider. The rebel in the dawn.
[laughter] I agree on all of the three last sentences. I also feel like we don't belong in any scene, which obviously is both a blessing and a curse. But so far we've mostly played at regular punk shows and some brainless people seemed to have enjoyed it. Soon we will be playing at a synth club and that excites me since I haven't done that with any of my former bands. I think growing up and arranging gigs in Linköping during the '80s have formed my ideas of how a "scene" should be. We always had a diverse mix of bands: synth / industrial, weirdo prog, hardcore, and punk. Never heard anyone complain about it back then, at least not locally. Outside of our hometown this mix of bands at shows were rare, if not nonexistent. We, on the other hand, loved that we didn't have to be tortured with the same sound the whole night and to be exposed to stuff that challenged our musical preferences.

MRR: Besides Isotope Soap, you also run the Killed By Death blog together with Martin Cannert of Lögnhalsmottagningen, which is a goldmine for us who are obsessed with the most inept, crude, and overlooked bands of the first punk era. Can you tell us a bit how this thing saw the light of day?
It was Packe (Raped Teenagers / Pusrad) who came up with the idea in winter / spring 2006 after he discovered several punk blogs posting obscure stuff and thought we should do the same given that we had a vast amount of rare great stuff. After about a year Packe didn't have the time anymore so I did it myself for awhile and then Martin came on. We complement each other. I post mostly US punk / hardcore and obvious KBD stuff from Europe and he takes the rest (UKDIY, power pop, international punk / hardcore). My growing minimal synth collection will see the light of day on the blog in the near future too.

MRR: Retrofuturism is the best (of course). What kind of future can we look forward to according to the eyes of Isotope Soap?
I'm not a planner. Never have been. I'm useless at it. I just do things without planning. And after I've done something it just happens that I feel the urge to release it. With that said there's *The WOW! Signal* 7" EP coming out on Levande Begravd Records (which just came out) and after that I don't know. I feel like experimenting more at the moment. But tomorrow I can have a strong urge to blast some hardcore so I guess it will be more of the same. I've gotten a request from a Belgian label about putting out a 7" or LP and do some gigs there. We also have plans to support Sleaford Mods in May 2018 since their manager is a fan. We'll see what happens. I want to have fun and have an outlet for my constant burning anger. Sounds shallow I know, but I'm a simple person.

Killed By Death *is an essential read for curious punks. Find out why at kbdrecords.com*

Isotopesoap.bandcamp.com

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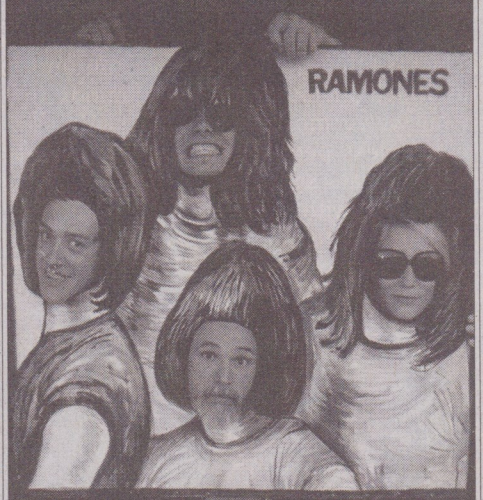

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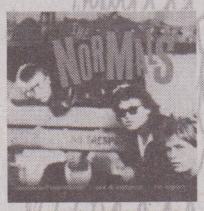

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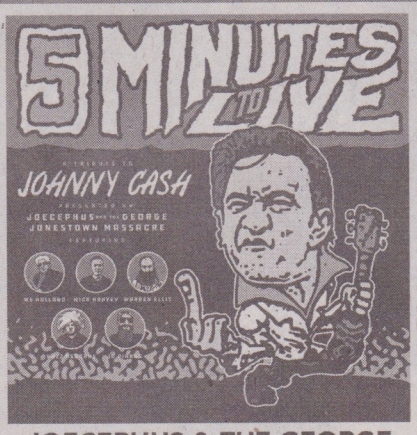

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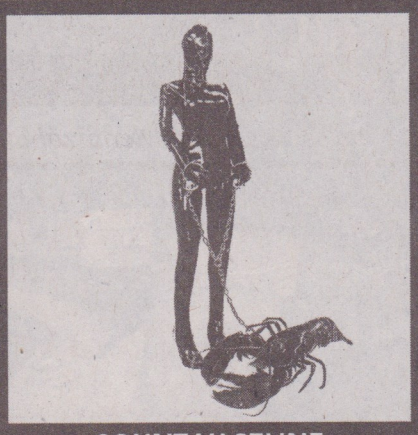

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COLONOSCOPY I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU ROCK AND ROLL
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DFMK

Interview by Daniel Becker. Photos by Chaba Mendizábal Ramirez and Omar Lara

The first time I saw DFMK in Oakland I was blown the fuck away by their contagious energy. DFMK is one of the best bands to come out of Tijuana in recent years. I ended up seeing them a few more times since then and got to know some of the members when I visited Tijuana last year. I found out that not only are they an insane band but they're really nice dudes! Their constant touring of the West Coast has earned them many fans and it seems like they're not stopping anytime soon. I interviewed them outside of their show at El Rio on my birthday, which was a great way to end the day.

MRR: When did you form?
Marco: We originally formed in 2008 and had different members and different songs. That version of the band broke up, we got new members and the current version formed in 2010.

MRR: What does DFMK mean?
Marco: We don't have a real meaning behind that. We always make up stuff.

MRR: Like MDC?
Marco: Yeah. It's fun to do that and it makes people get weirded out, like "what the fuck does it stand for?" It doesn't stand for nothing and people get confused.

MRR: Do you have some favorites?
Mr. Cap: Yeah, we have several favorites. The first one was "Diario Fumo Mota Karnal" or "Diario Fumo Mota Krew" which means "daily I smoke weed brother / crew." My personal favorite is "Dionicio Formo Mi Karacter" (Dionysus Formed My Character). We have a few favorites in English too, like three years ago we had a band t-shirt with a picture of the catholic pope that said "Don't Fuck My Kids," and also the most recent one, we ended up making beer koozies that said "Don't Fondle My Can," so yeah, we wrote it with a letter "C", but you get the meaning.

MRR: Are any of you in any other bands or are you working on any other projects?
Marco: I recently started a faster Spanish hardcore / powerviolence band called Violencia.
Alex: I have another band called Animals Revenge, which plays D-beat / rock'n'roll similar to Inepsy.
Boti: I used to play in an instrumental surf / rock'n'roll band with

Marco called La Venganza De San Carlos, but we haven't played in like a year.

MRR: Are you all originally from Tijuana?
Mr. Cap: I was born and raised there, as was Marco and Alex. Boti was born in San Diego California, but his family is Mexican and from Tijuana. He grew up there. Even though he currently lives in the US, he spends all his time in Tijuana, so he's part of the Mexican crew and part of the team!
Marco: Yeah, but Trump is his president!

MRR: That makes one of us. How did you all get into punk and hardcore?
Boti: When I was growing up I used to listen to all the '90s greats, like Michael Jackson and Genesis, but I got into punk rock because of my brother. He brought home a Nirvana CD and I was like "Oh shit what the fuck is this?" and I liked it so then he started bringing home more shit like NOFX and Bad Religion. So I stole his CDs and secretly listened to it all.
Alex: I started listening to punk rock because of my brother, he used to listen to NOFX which is why I started listening to punk rock music. Then one of my friends bought the first Casualties album and then I went to my first show, Tijuana No (a band from Tijuana), and that's where it all.started. I was about thirteen years old.
Marco: In high school I was a loser so I got into punk, that's it!
Mr. Cap: Basically, I started listening to heavy music like Sepultura and Anthrax in junior high school and during that time I got the Suicidal Tendencies first album on tape and really got into that. After that in high school I found a mixtape with bands I didn't know and then a skater friend of mine from school told me which bands were on the mixtape, to my surprise they were Bad Religion and Dead Kennedys, so that's how I started listening to punk. But the reason why I like punk rock instead of the heavy thrash bands is more because of the lyrics, They're more personal, an inner struggle regarding fitting in, like that Suicidal Tendencies song, "Institutionalized." That song really spoke to me. I related to the same frustrations I was having with my parents, because the way a dressed and the type of music I was listening back when I was 13. I knew I was not crazy!

MRR: What are your songs about?
Mr. Cap: As a group we all submit lyrics to a lot of the songs, but a lot of them are about inner and personal situations regarding substance abuse, partying too hard the night before, waking up early, going to work and having a crummy day. For the most part we write about negative things more than positive things. Like we have a song called "Negatividad" (negativity), which is about embracing the bad and trying to thrive through all the shit. If you don't win, fuck it, it doesn't matter. Good things do not always come easy.
Marco: Most of our songs are about self-destruction. In Mexico there are a lot of bands that are political and when I was growing up a lot of them were trying to be poetic and political and I was like *naaah*. I wanna try and write some party songs that talk about having a good time and with that try to be as honest as we can. We are speaking about what we do and how we live every day in a city like Tijuana—hanging out at bars and drinking with our friends. We also have some songs about having negative feelings, songs about lust, being on the road and so on.
Boti: We do have a positive song, "Deja de valer verga" (Stop Fucking Up). I think it's the only positive one we have, trying to take advantage of opportunities.
Marco: It says "*stop crying and just do something about it.*"

Mr. Cap: We're the opposite of that Bad Brains song, "PMA." *[laughter]* We got that NMA!

Marco: I wrote it with Angel, our other guitarist as a criticism of a lot of Positive Mental Attitude hardcore bands, like "dude, nothing's gonna change!" It's a pessimistic song—nothing is cool at all, the way we're living and whatever. It's fucked up, don't be positive about the world and they're like "everything's good everything's cool" and I'm like "No! Everything fucking sucks!" It also has a really dark meaning like appropriating bad feelings, don't try to reject them. Let them become a part of you.

Jorge: Also, we're gonna record a new album, twelve songs, and one of the songs is called "Ya No Quiero Ser Punk", which means "I Don't Want To Be A Punk Anymore." Marco wrote it, it has a particular line *[laughter]*...

Marco: Go ahead.

Jorge: It basically says *"I don't wanna be on* Maximum Rocknroll, *I don't care what you say what punk is."* It's not a criticism on the magazine but more of a criticism on the state of the punk attitude. A lot of people think that you have to do certain things to be considered a punk but basically, it's about being yourself. I'm a punk, I think I'm a punk, not because of the way that I dress, but for me being punk is just being yourself. If you're kind of loony, crazy, and weird—that's being a punk! Accept that you're weird and different than "normal" people. That's basically the main situation with our songs, it's about how we feel within society and how we go about with our lives, and they're mostly personal songs. A lot of people do relate with our lyrics and that's totally cool and awesome and it's very gratifying.

MRR: The irony!

Jorge: We respect the zine and the DIY attitude, the only criticism we have is with people who have the attitude that people have about being something in society. Basically the song says I don't wanna be a punk, if that's your idea of being punk, then I'm not one. I'm just myself.

MRR: What are some exciting things that are happening right now in Tijuana?

Alex: With my other band, Animals Revenge, we're trying to make the local scene stand up. Everyone is dividing into their own little scenes, so we're trying to make everyone play together like book shows with all kinds of genres.

MRR: What are some Tijuana bands that you like?

Mr. Cap: Solución Mortal, Tijuana No, Beam, Los Kung Fu Monkeys, Bye Sami, No Hope, Mexican Jumping Friojoles, Discordia, Los Alex, Bumbklaatt, Calafia puta, Bio Crisis, San Pedro el Cortez, Policías y Ladrones, Maladie, Teenage Kicks, Walle, XhendriX, Perra Galga, Perdición, Red Awekening, Shinjoku Riot, Bonebreaker, Sociedad Secreta del Vacío, Amenaza, 4 Eli, Tijuana Twist, Inclahn, Sucia Imagen, Roadside Butchery, Mcrimen, La Venganza de San Carlos, Los Subheads, Oui Sox, More Than Words, Injury, Owain, Surgat, Nuestra Sangre, Agente Calavera, Radio Bastards, 1MFS, Fractal, 357 Magnum y the Julio Pillado Experience. Some of them are gone and others are still active.

MRR: What are your hopes for the future of the Tijuana scene?

Marco: For years, there was a lot of unity in the Tijuana scene. In other cities it wasn't like this. It was like, if you play street punk you play with other street punk bands, and that didn't happen in Tijuana. But these divisions started happening lately because

there's more people and people start fighting and hating each other. Despite that, I think that Tijuana has a really good scene with a lot of good bands. My favorite bands in Mexico come to Tijuana, like there's a good crust scene and a lot of fast hardcore bands. We don't get a whole lot of punk rock.

MRR: It's kind of like that in the Bay also.
Mr. Cap: Basically, the scene as I look at it...sometimes people grow out of it and there's new kids who do not come together with the older generation and there's a gap there. I'm going to turn 40 years old, Marco and Alex are way younger than me, but punk rock brings us together. What Marco is saying is that there's new people that are coming into the scene and their bands won't play together because they have beef or drama with somebody else in another band. That's the whole situation right in the Tijuana scene.
Marco: Also, there's not a lot of venues.

MRR: What happened to the hostel (Enclave Caracol)?
Marco: They're still there, but they're not doing shows anymore. They still do DIY stuff but don't really book shows.
Mr. Cap: They sometimes do shows, but not as often as before. Their main focus is Food Not Bombs, which they feed hundreds of people that are currently homeless or got deported from the US. They've also being doing a DIY zine fest for three years straight, which is a weekend of activities, workshops and music. In my opinion, the hostel is a very positive and powerful force in the Tijuana community.

MRR: Do you have any hopes for the future Tijuana scene?
Boti: I'm the second oldest, and I'm kind of like anti-social so I don't really go out and mingle in the crowds.
Mr. Cap: You *do* mingle—when you're drinking!

MRR: That's what drinking's for!
Boti: That's my confidence recipe.
Marco: There is a future. There's a lot of people who do shows in Tijuana and there's a ton of shows, but sometimes I don't wanna go to shows because I already went to two or three that week. Some spots died and then they created new ones. That's punk I guess, you appropriate a place and turn it into a spot for shows.
Boti: The other thing is right now, Tijuana is only doing shows at bars so it's not open for everyone. When I was growing up people were doing shows in houses and everybody came. But right now you have to be over 18 to get into these bar shows. I'm hoping for more inclusiveness in the future.
Marco: And bars don't really care much about bands. There's a really good bar called Mods bar in Tijuana and some of our friends are running it, they have a good sound system, they let you get the door money.
Mr. Cap: It's my favorite to see shows. Also there's another bar called The Moustache Bar, they have a stage on their back patio spot, it's usually more alternative and hipster bands.

MRR: With a name like that...
Mr. Cap: They sometimes cater to punk shows, it's pretty cool.

MRR: I know you guys tour a lot, what's your favorite show that you ever played?
Mr. Cap: My personal favorite was in Tampico, in the state of Tamaulipas, which is in the Gulf of Mexico below Texas. That place is very dangerous, because of the Zetas, which is the criminal organization that has the control in that state, so it's very wild to drive in there. We played a show there with another band from TJ called Calafia Puta, and we were on a three week tour and getting to the city was a fucking adventure. In one moment there was a dude hijacking a big rig with a grenade and military people were coming from everywhere ready to fucking strike and we were stuck on a bridge with other several cars. Eventually the situation got diffused and we arrived to the city late afternoon. The show started at 11 pm. It was hot and humid the entire night, and we played around 2 am. There was underage drunk kids at the bar and they were moshing the whole show with us, it was so fucking nuts. It was so hot that we were drinking the whole night and not even getting buzzed cuz we were sweating it all out. The show ended at 4 am and there were still kids there.
Marco: I don't know if I have a favorite show, but last night we played in Santa Cruz at a cafe called Pergolesi, which is a coffee shop in an old colonial house. It's pretty DIY—it's just a small place and they don't have a stage, you just play on the floor and people on the other side are just eating their pies and drinking their coffee. A lot of people came and got what was going on...
Alex: I think, Sonora in Mexico, we played in a fighting ring, there was a lot of people like 500 people came...
Jorge: Maybe 200.
Alex: OK, but it was packed and it was a great show. Everybody was into the music.
Mr. Cap: The funny thing is that a bunch of bands played and we hit the stage around 1 am and we had to finish at 1:15 am. At the end the PA was cut off and I had to play the song with no microphone, dancing in the floor in between people. It was a hell of a way to end a three week tour.

MRR: Did the kids go nuts when they cut off the microphone?
Mr. Cap: We kept playing and everyone was into it.
Alex: We kinda seemed stupid cuz Jorge was singing without a microphone.
Mr. Cap: Because I was in a crowd and was just singing into people's faces going "Ahhhhh I'm here! I'm singing!" without a microphone.
Boti: I really don't have a favorite show, but I do remember one we played with 2 Minutos from Argentina. They've been one of my favorites ever since I got into punk rock, and being in bands. I always wanted to play with them so that was definitely one of my tops.
Alex: We got to do drugs with them and party, it was great!

MRR: Do you have a favorite city that you know every time you go there it's gonna be amazing.
Marco: Oh, San Francisco dude! *[laughter]*

MRR: Of course!
Mr. Cap: Recently we've been playing in Ventura, California, and we get a really good response there, it is so cool. A lot of people get excited when we play there, especially from the old school Nardcore fans that see us perform, they get very stoked. It's awesome.

MRR: You also said you're recording a new album?
Marco: We're planning to do our first 12".

Mr. Cap: Chicken from Dead To Me is going to produce our record, so we're really fucking excited about that. He got in touch with us with the interest to produce our new album and we're like, *hell yes*.

MRR: Anything else in the future?
Alex: We're always talking about making videos and it never happens.
Mr. Cap: Well we have a video split that came out with our friends from Calafia Puta. It came out in 2013 and basically, the video is all the members of the two bands getting killed one by one in several funny and fucked up ways by a lady in a cat mask. It's pretty funny.
Boti: I really like travelling so maybe next year we can go to Europe or somewhere, and get away from Mexico and the US for a while... Maybe we'll do the East Coast. I'm getting tired of playing the same places.

MRR: What the fuck happened to your van?
Boti: On our second day of our last tour, the axle started leaking in San Luis Obispo, so we took it to the shop and they kind of Mickey Mouse fixed it. So we started going and then it stalled in Oakland. Our friend lended us his van so we could continue the tour. We had to cancel half of it but they helped us get shows in the Bay so we did that for the rest of the tour. On the way back our friend checked the van and did a quick fix so we could get back to TJ, but he told us it's gonna be dangerous. But we like danger so we said fuck it. So north of Modesto, in Patterson, in the middle of nowhere we were driving and Pablo, our roadie, saw this big ass flame going out of the rear axle and yelled at us to pull over so we pulled over and everyone just jumped out of the car and he saved us.
Mr. Cap: Basically, Danny, the other roadie, grabbed the extinguisher and was having a hard time putting out the fire. I grabbed the extinguisher from him, but in seconds the fire in the tire got very intense that the extinguisher died and we did not have anything else to try to put the fire out. We were in total shock, we had a full tank of gas and we didn't have time to take out our equipment or our personal belongings. In minutes the entire van was in flames in front of our eyes. It was really gut wrenching and heartbreaking. It was really emotional. We had that van since 2012, and it's been like a part of the band. We even named her Van-Nessa.
Alex: A bunch of bands from TJ borrowed that van, so it was also a big part of the Tijuana scene.

MRR: Anything else that you want to add?
DFMK: Fuck Trump, fuck borders, don't do meth!

dfmk.bandcamp.com

ERIK NERVOUS

Photos by Shea Miller.
Interview by Connor Cummins of Spodee Boy.

What do you get when you combine one punk and a four-track recorder? In the case of Erik Hart, better known as Erik Nervous, you get four EPs issued by acclaimed labels as Lumpy and Neck Chop. Now on the cusp of the release of his first LP, Erik Nervous is ready to take on the world.

MRR: So I'll cut straight to the chase here, what makes you so nervous, Erik?
A Gargle Blaster-esque cocktail of genetic, psychological, and environmental factors. And overexposure to tourists and jocks. There's also a heavy chemical dependence on highly caffeinated carbonated liquids.

MRR: What is your favorite carbonated caffeine drink? I would guess you are a Mountain Dew guy.
I go for Cherry Coke generally. Barq's ain't half bad either. I'm a big fan of vanilla cream soda in general. There's actually a very weird stigma towards Mountain Dew around my hometown. Amish folks chug that stuff by the gallon. I worked in the kitchen of a local restaurant for a little bit, and my first day there, a twentysomething Amish server girl ran up to me and said, I quote, "Have you ever tried putting the French vanilla coffee creamer in your Mountain Dew? It tastes just like a green Skittle," and then she ran off.

MRR: Wow, the thought of liquid green Skittles is making me a little nauseous.
To her credit, it is uncannily similar in flavor.

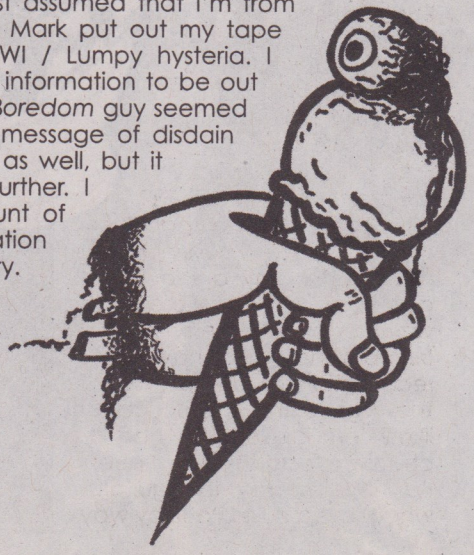
MRR: What was your hometown like? You're not actually from Kalamazoo correct?
I was born and raised in Shipshewana, Indiana. I moved to Kalamazoo for a couple of years for college, but I'm taking this year off at the moment, so I'm back in Shipshe. Shipshewana is a little town in the Northeast corner of Indiana, just about ten minutes away from the Michigan state line. For all intents and purposes, it's nothing but a tourist trap with a couple of suburbs tacked on. The gimmick is that there's a relatively large Amish community in and around the town. Bored old white people from Chicago with money to burn come to see what it's like to live simply.

MRR: What are some fun things to do in Shipshewana? What is *your* favorite thing to do in Shipshe besides fire up that four track??
The best thing to do in Shipshe is to eat and leave. Jojo's Pretzels is a longstanding local favorite, but you wanna get there after 3 pm because the lines get ridiculous. We also have Hawaiian shaved ice, because nothing says a taste of the country like authentic Hawaiian cuisine.

The big draw for tourists, asides from gawking at Amish people, is the flea market that's open in the summer. It's really just an overpriced dollar store-thrift shop combo that's stretched out over an acre or so of gravel. Traffic down main street is unbearable once it kicks into gear.

MRR: What's your best thrift score?
It'd have to be the original mint condition baby blue leisure suit that I'm wearing on the insert on the Neck Chop 7". Close second would probably my copy of Swans' *Soundtrack For The Blind* I got for a buck. I also have a nice collection of vintage square end neckties that I'm rather fond of.

MRR: That is a good leisure suit! Speaking of the *Teen Junk* insert, what was the idea behind "NOT ON LUMPY, NOT FROM NWI"? Just poking some fun at Mark [Winter] and Marty [AKA Lumpy]?
I wasn't trying to poke fun at all! There were a lot of misconceptions about where I was from at the time. People just assumed that I'm from the NWI area since Mark put out my tape at the height of NWI / Lumpy hysteria. I wanted the correct information to be out there. The *Terminal Boredom* guy seemed to interpret it as a message of disdain towards those guys as well, but it couldn't anything further. I have a huge amount of respect and admiration for Mark and Marty. I owe everything that's happened with my music to them both.



MRR: Which one would you bet on in a fight though? Mark skates so

my money is on him.
Marty skates as well, so it's an even playing field in that aspect. I think Marty would employ some strategic slime to blind Mark and then go in for the kill.

MRR: What is your most embarrassing middle school memory?
I was really into anime / manga around then. I feel like that's enough said on that matter

MRR: As of the time of this interview, it's national coming out day. How do you define your sexuality?
I'd consider myself bi. Sexuality is such a hot topic these days, I don't feel entirely comfortable going in depth, just for the sheer risk of unintentionally offending so many people out of pure unmalicious ignorance of the hyper-specific terminology and linguistics that have inundated recent debates of such things. I'm really into stand up comedy and so many of my favorites run into controversy for trying to discuss these sort of things in their own voice. It feels like people have turned to examining every word people say instead of listening to the overall point the person is trying to make. Bill Burr had a good way of putting it in an interview, and it probably won't make a lot of sense trying to explain it text, but he said that people look at someone's quote and go "he said this, let's look up what it means on the chart, instead of actually listening to the guy." Apologies for getting soapbox-y there. I mean no ill-will. Fully LGBT supportive here, I swear.

MRR: I respect that about you Erik! Let's get back to the music, 21 Savage or Migos?
Haven't heard of either of 'em. My musical knowledge is 50 feet deep, but half a foot wide; I know old punk and some other weird stuff, but next to nothing else.

MRR: You recently did a 7" on Total Punk called *Ice Cream*, what is your favorite ice cream?
It's a toss up between cookies and cream or mint chip. You can't beat a good vanilla frozen custard either.

MRR: Earlier this year you went on tour with Spodee Boy and Rik and the Pigs joined the tour for a few dates around the Midwest. What was your experience touring with Spodee Boy? Second, who is your least favorite member of Rik and the Pigs? Third, where did you find that alcoholic "cartoonist" Jeff and how did you meet sweet, sweet Roldy?
Erik: It was absolutely the greatest week of my life up to this point. All of the Spodesters are fantastic guys whom I'd love to play a show and get a greasy diner breakfast with again sometime. Full transparency, I have no recollection of all but two of the Pigs' names, but I really liked 'em all too! If I had to choose a least favorite, I guess I'd have to say the guitarist who played a Les Paul, by way of the fact I never really talked with the guy. No disrespect to him or Rikky or the rest of the Pigs. Dave, the Pigs' bass player, is one of my favorite flyer artists of all time, and the Table Sugar tape he recently put out on his label is stellar.

Jeff recently moved back to Kalamazoo from New Orleans, and Roldy had a mutual friend of his in Useless Eater of No Bails who put Jeff in contact with us. We jammed a couple evenings and hit it off and now he's our drummer. He's rock solid behind the kit and a top notch songsmith himself to boot. He's gonna have a record of his own stuff out on Goodbye Boozy next year. Without Jeff in the band we'd probably be a disaster on the road. He's got so much touring experience under his belt and he fills in all the conversational gaps me and Roldy leave. I don't really hold the booze thing against him.

The story of how I met Roldy is that a couple years back, a couple months after i had moved up to Kalamazoo, Marty emailed me, Roldy, and Useless out of the blue about setting up a show in Kzoo for the Dumpers and CCTV after a Detroit show fell through. I met Roldy in person at said show and we were fast friends almost immediately. That was the same show I gave my demo to Mark and Marty that got the ball rolling for me. I really owe everything that's happened to that one show in all honesty.

MRR: Wow, what a true story of valor and confidence. How was it playing Roldy's house with the Spits recently? How did that even come about?
That Spits show was a hell of a time. I don't think I've really fully grasped the gravity of playing with them quite yet. We went out and got ten or twenty bucks worth of cheap halloween decorations and black lights just for the occasion. Roldy and his housemates have been big fans of the Spits for ages so they were flipping out for the couple of weeks leading up to it.

It was a one-off show in Roldy's basement so we had a PA on loan that we weren't entirely familiar with, so there were a couple of technical hitches in the midst of the Spits'

set, but overall it was an incredible show. Smelled like a bottle return down there after it was over though. The Spits all separately mentioned wanting to take us on tour with them in the future, so fingers crossed!

MRR: Jeff mentioned that in Memphis! I hope it works out.
Same! It's kind of hitting me in waves how quickly everything seems to be progressing for us.

MRR: Aww that is a beautiful story. What other future plans are in store for Erik Nervous and the Beta Blockers?
Currently I'm in the process of writing material for an LP. Everything up to now I've recorded on my own, so I want to do this one with Jeff and Roldy. We're also talking about planning out our next excursion on the road, thinking about trying to go down south to New Orleans and Texas possibly. There's also a lot of opportunities for us on the West Coast, & at some point we wanna get out there as well.

This isn't really related to my band, but there's a band in San Francisco that wants me to come out and record their LP, and I'm extremely excited about the prospect of it. Personally the production aspect of making music has always been the most interesting and fun part of it. I really hope to have the opportunity to record some bands in the near future. Being a recording enthusiast in the punk world is a big gamble, what with the DIY undercurrent of the whole genre. Bands don't really seek out a producer, you know?

MRR: So there will soon be a 7" available that has a song with you and Spodee Boy on it. I assume it will be a hit single! Can you tell me anything about that?
On the last day of our tour together in Chicago, we had finished playing and slinging merch to our inebriated spectators and retired to the luxurious apartment of the wonderful couple who were allowing both of our bands to occupy their sofas for the evening. Said couple also happened to be a musical duo of lo-fi garage stylings, and as such they had a functional Tascam four track cassette recorder on display.

Spodee and his handsome bass player descended upon the machine and began laying out some skeletal tracks of bass and a solitary snare drum. Once they were satisfied with their contributions, Spodee called me over and shoved a guitar into my hands and demanded I supply a guitar track to compliment their creation. I obliged, improvising a quick open chord riff along with a more subdued rhythm track. This was the end of my involvement with this recording, and I have not heard the finished results for myself as of yet, and as such am awaiting the single with much anticipation myself.

MRR: You were also interviewed for a documentary that night correct? Anything ever come of that?
Not that I've seen or heard. They were some local film students looking to make a Decline Of Western Civilization style documentary of the contemporary Midwest scene, and were apparently in contact with a number of other bands. Their video of my performance and subsequent interview is available online, but that's all I've seen come of their project. A shame really. They had some great names lined up.

MRR: Awww bummer! Speaking of the contemporary Midwest scene, how did you get involved with the *Killed By Meth* compilations?
No Bails was on the first volume, and Useless recommended me for the second volume, and *voila*.

MRR: Where is your favorite place to go in the Midwest so far? Not just to play, but also just to hang out in?
For sheer atmosphere, State Street Pub in Indianapolis is at the top of my list. Rich, the usual DJ there, has some incredible records, they project old VHS tapes on the wall across from the bar, and have incredible burgers. The first time I played at State Street they were having skater trivia night, and had a little ramp and rail set up out front. The Lamplighter in Memphis is pretty damn cool as well. The absolute perfect dive bar atmosphere.

MRR: *Can't Stand The Midwest* or *The Midwest Can Be Alright*?
If we're talking songs, *Can't Stand The Midwest* by a mile.

As for the real thing, I'd have a real hard time giving a concrete answer. I definitely love the weird underground of the Midwest and all of its denizens, but everything else—politics, geography, etc—really irk me. If it was possible to condense all the cool weird people and things into one perfect Midwest freak show city, the world would be an easier place to live in.

MRR: Let's go back a little further, you did some dates last year with the Beta Blockers. Was that your first time touring? Was it the same lineup as the current Erik Nervous incarnation? Any likes / dislikes? Any dramatic realizations about being on the road?
It was our first time on the road with Jeff. We'd previously done a short three day jaunt down to St Louis with an old friend of Roldy's holding down the drums.

I definitely enjoy all the different record shops you get to explore before shows. The drives from city to city can get pretty long, especially in the cramped little four door we've been touring in. I can't really attest to having any grand revelations on the road. Jeff's CD collection did make me realize how monotonous Ramones-influenced bands can get.

MRR: You chumps got offered a spot at Gonerfest 14 and turned it down. Jeff even showed up to sell his "comics" and horrendous t-shirts. Why did you turn it down?
[laughter] No, we got offered a last minute after party show. There's no way we'd turn down a spot on the Gonerfest line up. Roldy and I don't have the spare cash or time to attend the full Gonerfest experience, so we'd have to drive eight hours down, play our set at 3 am, then drive another eight hours back. It just didn't make financial or geographical sense for us to do it. Bad timing. Jeff isn't letting us hear the end of it.

And it is a shame that Jeff sells such offensive comics & shirts. I would be shocked and appalled if some poor soul would go onto the internet, search for the name of his online store (Eat To Survive), and then peruse his wares. And to even consider the notion that someone would entertain the idea of purchasing one of those tactless piles of ink and textile! Absolutely disgusting.

MRR: Who is the best band from Kalamazoo? Current and all time?
Currently, I really like this noise jazz freak out band called Spirits Rejoice. As for all time, my pick, asides from the Spits obviously, would be a band from five or six years ago called Batcave. They put out a tape and did a live radio session for the local college station. If I had the funds and opportunity, I'd bend over backwards to do an LP anthology of their stuff. There also was a real old band called Dick and the Balls that had a hilarious song called "Whopper Beats the Big Mac." I have to thank Useless for showing me that one.

MRR: What is the worst band you have ever played with?
This horrifically wanky psych-drone band from Nashville called Drip. They played with us in Indianapolis on our first little tour that I mentioned earlier. They played three songs in forty minutes. They wound up clearing the whole room so we ended up playing to seven people. Apparently the lead guitarist / vocalist turned out to be an asshole and they broke up not long after.

MRR: Should I quit my job and move to Kalamazoo? Any last words, thoughts or anything you want to share??
If you can acclimate quickly to the Michigan winters, then come on by! We have 24-hour donuts and more micro breweries than you can shake a snow shovel at. Kalamazoo needs more punks.

It's okay to be influenced by new bands. Lotta quote-unquote tastemakers throwing around the phrase "ripped off" in reference to bands who've been inspired into action by the recent wave of weirdos with guitars and four tracks these days. Ain't nothing wrong with that sorta thing, kids. Don't let one person's opinion stop your fun. Play what you like to play and / or listen to.

Somebody reissue or bootleg the first two Six Minute War seven inches and / or the Victims' *Sleeping Dogs Lie* compilation, please and thank you.

eriknervous.bandcamp.com

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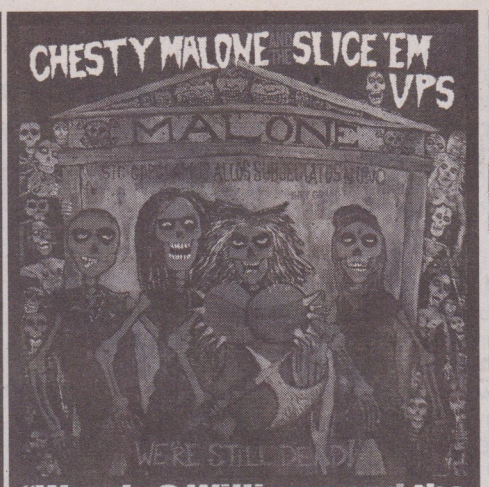

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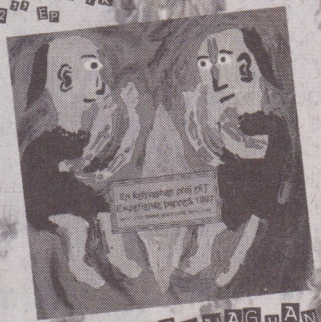

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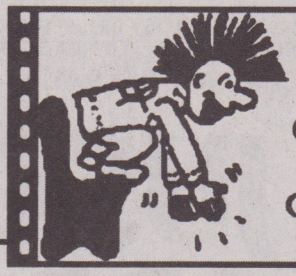

BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

We are always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146 USA. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area let us know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. We will go see it.

It is that time of the year when I, the President of the Punk Rock Film Critics Association™, release our list of the best films of 2017. Making these best of lists is a bunch of bullshit, but who am I to deny anyone including myself this pointless annual ritual. Here are the Punk Rock Film Critics Association™ best films of 2017.

American Epic

I enjoy this documentary so much I have seen it three times, bought two of the soundtrack albums (there are eight of them) and read the book. **American Epic** is a three part documentary about the early days of the American recording industry. Record scouts were sent out to small towns and rural areas to find new sounds because the record industry was dying due to the popularity of radio. The influence of the musicians the scouts uncovered is incalculable and the music still sounds great today. (americanepic.com)

Two Trains Runnin'

Two Trains Runnin' is almost a sequel of **American Epic**. It is the story of three separate journeys that each culminated on the same day June 21, 1964. Two of the events were music related. Two groups of blues fans set out to Mississippi trying to find the blues musicians Son House and Skip James. The other group went to Mississippi to help register African Americans to vote. Although the three groups never meet their stories are intertwined. **Two Trains Runnin'** is a compelling history of 1960s America. (twotrainsrunnin.com)

Evolutionary Blues...West Oakland's Music Legacy

Evolutionary Blues...West Oakland's Music Legacy is a modest production about how the blues got to Oakland. As part of the great migration African Americans left the South. Some settled in Oakland, CA. Their Southern musical styles ended up being influenced by their new surroundings and challenges creating a different type of blues music. (evolutionarybluesfilm.com)

I Am What I Play

The stories of radio DJs Meg Griffin, Charles Laquidara, David Marsden and Pat O'Day become a fascinating nostalgia trip to the heyday of radio in the 1960s to the 1980s. These DJs stood up to management to be able to play what they wanted and generally got away with many things before corporations homogenized the airwaves. I hope that their stories will inspire people to seek out community and noncommercial radio stations. (distractioninc.com)

Saving Banksy

A look at the art world from the perspective of art collector Brian Greif who decides he needs to save a piece by infamous street artist Banksy. The art is on the side of a building so the project is very involved. Tthere is also the matter of what to do with the piece. A shady art dealer offers big money for it, but Greif would rather it went to a museum. Sadly no museum wants it. **Saving Banksy** hits all angles: is it art, who owns it, and what should become of it. (savingbanksy.com)

The Allins

I am amazed at how engaging a movie about GG Allin's mother Aleta and his brother Merle is. It is about how both survive the legend and death of GG Allin. They deal with their loss in opposite ways. Aleta wants to forget the performer known as GG Allin and simply remember her sweet son Kevin. Merle keeps GG's legacy alive by selling as many products with GG's image as possible. (toolboxfilm.dk)

London Town

Fourteen year old Shay is forced to help support his family when his mother abandons them and his dad is injured at work. While hustling to make a living, Shay meets a punk girl who introduces him to the music scene where he also meets Joe Strummer. **London Town** captures the overall sweet feeling of discovering punk. (londontownfilm.com)

Beside Bowie: The Mick Ronson Story

The title is somewhat deceiving. Ronson played with Bowie for a few years during his musical career. Although he never found that level of success again, it does not mean he was not fulfilled. The interviews with Ronson are very enlightening. His thoughts on Bowie never revisiting Ziggy are the best anti-reunion arguments I have ever heard. (cardinalreleasing.com)

Turn Of The Century: NYC Punk In The 2000s

If the time comes when suddenly everyone is interested in this time period, the diary style of **Turn Of The Century: NYC Punk In The 2000s** will come in handy. There are performances by bands such as Tie Reds and Hank Wood & the Hammerheads interspersed with the changing state of the city of New York. The montage of the last days, death, and burial of CBGB is worth multiple views. (tmsrocks.com)

Turn It Around: The Story Of East Bay Punk

The story of the punks from the East Bay of Northern California. **Turn It Around: The Story Of East Bay Punk** goes from Berkeley to Pinole and everywhere in between to tell you how the punk scene in this area ended up creating Green Day. The documentary looks great and amazingly features as close to everyone who wanted to appear in it as they could fit in three hours. (eastbaypunk.com)

Double Exposure

Double Exposure is set in Chicago focusing on an aspiring singer named John. John has to deal with typical family stuff like his parents trying to get him to get a real job and whatnot. After an uncomfortable dinner with the family John heads to the club for his band's show. The club scene is great, trying a bit too hard to appear punk, but in a charming way. The band's songs (performed by Peter Gunn) are catchy too. (nightflight.com)

I'm Not Fascinating - The Movie!

I'm Not Fascinating - The Movie! is the hilarious fictional film of the San Francisco band Icky Boyfriends. It chronicles the band's unlikely musical rise and fall. This is a digitally remastered version of the original VHS release and comes with lots of extras. (dannyplotnick.com)

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(PA) Pete Avery
(P$) Paul Argent
(RH) Ryan Hertel
(RK) Ramsey Kanaan
(RL) Ray Lujan
(RO) Rotten Ron Ready
(WN) Robert Collins

AMERICAN HATE – "Our Love Is Real" LP

This record is a work of art, a fully-actualized hardcore LP with plenty of pop sensibilities. The songs are quite eclectic, often layered, and each one seems to hold a piece to the next song. Musical comparisons are honestly besides the point, and there's way too much going on to boil it down. I hear elements of Revolution Summer, *Bleach*, mid-period BLACK FLAG, the first DIE KREUZEN LP, and *Zen Arcade*, and there are several one-off elements such as horns and organ. The majority of the record is mid-paced or dirgey, but they break out into fast hardcore on occasion. The vocals also frequently shapeshift along with the music, though I get a subdued Springa vibe (insert "How Much Art?" joke here) most often, along with tongue-out lethargic grunts, and more straightforward hardcore shouting. The full-size insert is beautifully put together, with each song getting its own page (something I rarely see anymore but always love) consisting of handwritten lyrics and highly-stylized photos to go with. These and other photos in the insert often show the band members together, which along with the one of label-guy Ralph at a desk, go to show that their love is real, indeed. (DG)
(Not Normal)

BAD SONS – "Hot Face" EP

The cover art of this album is a pizza burger with crushed up cans of Old Style in between. Made me wonder if these guys were from Chicago. I checked—they are. They play slightly lo-fi melodic punk rock with throaty vox. I'm a sucker for melodic punk and angry vocals so this debut release is pretty fucking awesome to me. The third track "Total Shock" has a straight up punk verse and a catchy chorus. On "Don't Look My Way," the first track on Side B, BAD SONS keep up the intensity and add some rock'n'roll vibes. I dig it! (DB)
(self-released)

BARE KNUCKLE HOOLIGANS – "Never Walk Alone" LP

From the name, artwork, and cover photos (the band pose with their family and friends, made up of 90 percent skinheads) you'd be forgiven for assuming these Indiana hoodlums played Oi! music. In fact, what we have here is an album of energetic, catchy punk that's not a million miles away from the first couple of RANCID records (e.g. pre-ska). Catchy riffs, rousing choruses, and throaty vocals (replete with solidly working class, left-leaning lyrics) and you're onto a winner. Listening to the record the photos on the sleeve start to make sense: these guys are obviously part of a tight-knit and supportive scene. (AM)
(Crowd Control)

BEGGARS – "Spitting Volume" LP

Ohio motörpunk, raw and nasty. Try to imagine NEW BOMB TURKS (I know, but it's not just the Columbus connection, I swear) sensibilities clashing with INEPSY's penchant for filthy fistbanging metal. Then again, the flip side starts with a semi-ballad banger called "Fuck Mountain," so maybe this is just a high energy butt rock records. (WN)
(Columbus Blood)

BLEAKNESS – "Ruined Fate" EP

Right out of the gate this French trio recall the gloomy Northwest US sound. Glassy guitar melodies are the most definitive aspect of their sound. Think BORN DEAD ICONS and COMPLICATIONS in the vocal department, though BLEAKNESS is a bit more shouted than growled. Heaps of low-end in the mix and the drums are pushed into the red so the cymbals have a distorted wash quality, contributing to an overall gritty effect. Nothing too memorable but not without its moments. (MA)
(Analog Profusion / Destructure)

BOTOX RATS – "Nasty Business" LP

BOTOX RATS is a rock'n'roll band from London, England. The title track, taken from a split that the band did with MODERN ACTION in 2010, is really fucking cool! The more I listen to this record the more I love it. Old school garage rock, snotty vocals, upbeat drums, and kickass guitar parts. Most of the songs are really good and catchy with a hint of dirt, all recorded between 2013 and 2017. Cool shit if you're into bands like the EXPLODING HEARTS. I'm sold! (DB)
(Wanda)

BRATAKUS – "Target Girl" LP

This debut LP created by two sisters from the highlands of Scotland delivers ten solid streetpunk jams. Unapologetically aggressive without quite being hardcore, BRATAKUS sounds like a more melodic version of early HARUM SCARUM or a more straightforward DIY version of the DISTILLERS. The record includes cool samples that magnify the nihilistic rage of the songs, including a clip from Divine—*"Advocate cannibalism! Eat shit!"* Self-released on the band's label Screaming

Babies Records, the album artwork features a woman standing in front of a circus act knife-throwing target. The symbolism may be relevant to a shared femme experience of targeted abuse in the world, but BRATAKUS's sound resonates most strongly with the defiant fearlessness that the Target Girl embodies. (HB)
(Screaming Babies)

THE COWBOYS – LP

Sometimes punk is easy to identify, and sometimes (like with this album) it's buried deep under, and bubbles up just often enough to remind you that, yes you are listening to a punk record. But you probably also can't describe what's punk about it. This record sounds like if WEEN were trying to copy late-era REPLACEMENTS. Or if ROYAL HEADACHE suddenly became huge stoners. And they dress like a bunch of high school kids going to a PAVEMENT show in the '90s. Not to mention the singer can actually legit sing. But hey, Bloomington, Indiana is a weird place. It's a town that creates complicated and confusing humans, who in turn create complicated and confusing music. This album is great, and I'm not sure how to describe why. But I recommend you get high and listen to it. (FS)
(HoZac)

CYANIDE SCENARIO – "Born to Die" LP

Recorded in the mid-'80s in England and unreleased until now, this record exemplifies the sound of British punk growing out of its angry, adolescent roots and entering the more nuanced aural terrain of anarcho-punk and darkwave. Calm yet purposeful vocals poetically wrap around thoughtful political themes, rather than reciting simplified political directives. The drumming is heavy and unorthodox, channeling the '80s influence of synth-centered industrial beats. A truly beautiful artifact of that mythical time in punk history where authenticity was something taken for granted, this record is definitely a must-hear for fans of all things darkwave and anarcho-punk. (HB)
(Inflammable Material)

DAY CREEPER – "A Mirror To The Fire" LP

Although not as thoroughly drenched in pop-laden hooks as, say, HOT NEW MEXICANS, this has a somewhat similar feel. Sad, sultry rock singer plays catchy garage pop / power pop combination and listens to the Boss and the REPLACEMENTS every chance they can. I think you know the drill. You've seen it a few times, and know what to expect, but when it's done right, it's totally killer. This might not rip your shorts off, but it's pretty tight. Low bullshit rock that I'm pretty stoked to hear today. (DZ)
(Heel Turn / Superdreamer)

DEATH TOLL 80K – "Step Down" LP

Brutal, guttural grind punk from Finland. This is a relentless barrage of loose splattering grind, crust riffs, and breakdowns. Reminds me of the shit we'd listened to on the Organ Haus couch in Brooklyn, trying to convince the rest of the living room this was in fact a "punk" record. EXTREME NOISE TERROR, EXCRUCIATING TERROR, DISSENSION, and AGATHOCLES maniacs take notice. All killer, all driller. What is that Orwellian idiom about the future? The image of 80,000 dreads, whipping a human face—forever. (JR)
(Svart)

DES DEMONAS – LP

This LP starts off with a taunting song called "The South Will Never Rise Again" in which the singer even adds "*ha ha*" near the end. DES DEMONAS continue that type of attitude throughout this record. The singer Jacky Cougar Abok has a flat, spoken way of singing that sounds very unique. The music is garage rock with Farfisa organ and swirling guitar riffs. At time it reminds me of the early DIRTBOMBS. This is an excellent LP. Great band name too. (CK)
(In The Red)

BEN EDGE & THE ELECTRIC PENCILS – LP

Peppy, poppy British rocker dude with a "one man band" style rhythm section. Although not super goofy, fans of BILLY CHILDISH and early NOBUNNY should be pretty stoked on this. It's quirky enough with some weird hooks to keep my ears glued. I like this shit. (DZ)
(Almost Ready / One Man Movement)

EIGHT – "Alone" EP

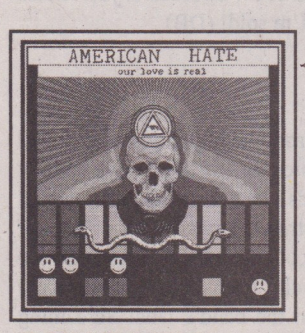
If GIANT DRAG were a three-piece, louder, and wanted to really embrace their punk tendencies, they would have been EIGHT. Pick this up before it disappears to get yourself a handful of necessary new tracks from this Philly trio. "839" is getting added to my "crucial jams" list for the coming year thanks to the haunting vocal harmonies and the noisy and unrestrained guitar attacks. This is also worth owning for the awesome painted cover art. Support this band so they keep doing it! (RH)
(Dead Broke)

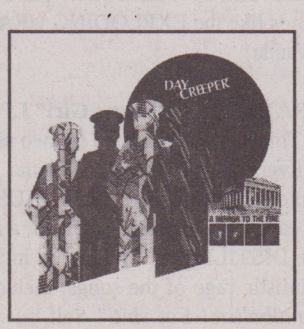
THE EJECTOR SEATS – "Everybody Calm Down" LP

A pretty slick, "genre-punk" package (stripes, neon colors, "typewriter" fonts) belies the raw, stripped down punk rock record inside, recorded by people that can actually play. The obvious chops are tempered by the blown-out production, which gives the album a personality that would be spoiled by too much "warm tone." Someone knew what they were doing here. The bass is too loud, the guitar too brittle, the snotty English-accented vocals bleeding into the red: that's what make this work. Something in the water in Hermosa Beach obviously... (AM)
(Collision Course)

FINAL – "Obsolescencia Humana" 12"

I have been really excited about the current wave of new bands coming out of Bogotá, Colombia and FINAL is no exception! I had the pleasure of seeing them live on their US West Coast tour with DEAD HERO a while back and it was fucking great. *Obsolescencia Humana* is catchy, dark and will be over before you want it to be. Songs like "No Eres Nada" and "Esperar" display their UK82 influence (à la





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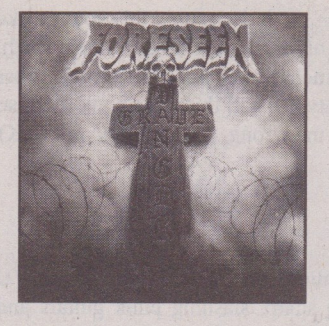


the ENEMY or the PARTISANS) while much of the guitar work also incorporates some darker and more somber melodies that really help to keep things interesting. While much of the record is faster and will have you pogo-ing, it is tempered with melodic mid-tempo jammers such as "Arresto." In general, I really appreciated how the ferocity and melody were very well balanced, reminiscent of a band like IV REICH. This record is great, check it out! (BP)
(Byllepest)

LARS FINBERG – "Moonlight Over Bakersfield" LP

Many might have high hopes for LARS FINBERG's newest solo LP *Moonlight Over Bakersfield*, and I believe it's safe to say they will not be disappointed. Finberg's prolific and varied CV includes A-FRAMES, the INTELLIGENCE, THEE OH SEES, WOUNDED LION, and PUBERTY. With garage illuminary TY SEGALL at the producer's / engineer's helm for *Moonlight Over Bakersfield*, FINBERG manages to craft a unsettling, beautiful, otherworldly punk sound. There are strong elements of experimental pop that weave and overlay angular and groove heavy post-punk, sometimes meandering into weird territories that are so phonically sparse that they bring you to the edge of discomfort. Although it's very experimental, it's clear Finberg is in complete control of his craft. Keyboard laden and quirk heavy, this album includes appearances of members of the INTELLIGENCE, LA LUZ, MELVINS / BIG BUSINESS, and a very notable MIKAL CRONIN on sax in "Benevolent Panic." Eerie and bleak in the best way imaginable. (CR)
(In The Red)

FINISTERRE – LP

Germany's FINISTERRE deliver a carnivalistic whimsical approach to crust punk that is somewhat post-punk, somewhat proto-hardcore. This reminds me of SCREAMERS, SCAVEN, RUDIMENTARY PENI, FLEAS & LICE, THOSE WHO SURVIVED THE PLAGUE, and KUKL. Weird crusty hardcore that is heavily narrated, with various tempo changes within the gloomy storytelling. The liner notes explain the inspiration for each of the songs as well. "Fibre" is my favorite track, filled with anthemic cynicism and griminess. The side continues with an AFTER THE BOMBS-style onslaught on "Crucial Times." I was thoroughly impressed by the end. (JR)
(Contraszt!)

FIRE HEADS – LP

FIRE HEADS are not quite the classic party garage band, but they do a good job acting the part. Featuring the HUSSY on guitar (that band is just one guy), FIRE HEADS play a similar brand of lighthearted garage punk, but with the addiction of some angular chords, off-kilter riffs, and the odd feedback squeal. All of this, plus some mistreated white-boy blues, gives the record just a touch of the old AmRep feel. Just a little touch. Mostly this record is for feeling groovy and partying; it's just the party record for people who think GUANTANAMO BAYWATCH or MEAN JEANS are just too fucking stupid and weak sounding. (LP)
(Big Neck)

FORESEEN – "Grave Danger" LP

Heshers scanning these pages, pay heed to this record. This ain't *Escape From Weedbong Mountain Part 420*; what we have here is some devastatingly tight crossover thrash. Finland's FORESEEN have been actively enabling mosh pits since at least 2010, and their second LP may be their strongest yet. Like their better known contemporaries POWER TRIP, FORESEEN are the direct descendents in a long line of nasty bands including LEEWAY and CRO-MAGS (circa *Best Wishes*). Unlike other crossover bands, FORESEEN spend most of their time in high gear, serving riffs at a velocity that perhaps only CRYPTIC SLAUGHTER has approached. Also unlike many of their contemporaries, there are very few hooks to be had—just sheer brutality. This fucking *rips*. (JD)
(Svart / 20 Buck Spin)

FUTURE STORMS – "A Long List of Grievances" EP

This is three tracks of drums, bass, shouting, and gruff vocals that are half sung / half yelled. It's pretty straight, mid- to uptempo punk that is on the darker, heavier side of the spectrum. For the most part, the double tracked bass lends a thickness to the songs that almost makes you forget about guitars; at other moments the lack of diverse sounds is very evident. (PA)
(self-released)

GAD WHIP – "In A Room" 12"

This Yorkshire foursome weave a dubby, instrumental shag carpet, all tobacco scraps and bits of Rizla packet, upon which a Northern poet in the vein of JOHN COOPER CLARKE wanders around in his bare feet, ranting about the state of society or branching off into psychedelic meanderings. At first listen it occurs to the reviewer that this might be the first example of post-SLEAFORD MODS music, if Jason Williamson ditched his mate with the laptop in favor of the JESUS LIZARD. Intriguing stuff but it's going to be tough to outrun the SLEAFORD comparisons in the current critical climate. Oh, it's a one-sided four song EP with a rather fetching etching on the B-side. (AM)
(Ever/Never)

GEN POP – "On The Screen" EP

Damn, this is really good. Especially songs like "The Wall"...It's angular and bouncy and even throws in some MINUTEMEN-like energy. GEN POP are at their best when they capture this weird hybrid energy that's somewhere between the ANGRY ANGLES and the MINUTEMEN. A really enjoyable listen, worth seeking out if you're tired of your old URINALS or WIRE records and want something with some energy along those lines. (P$)
(Lumpy / Upset The Rhythm)

GUITAR GANGSTERS – "Sex & Money" LP

Before I could even get the record out of the sleeve, I was a little worried this was going to be some old dudes trying to put out a punk record that sounded like punk sounded when they were kids. (And I get that I'm part of the problem and not part of the solution on that

front.) I might not be too far off the mark, but, man, this sounds like real, genuine music and not a bunch of guys trying to relive their youth. The first one's a cute love song. It's melodic and not (fake) gritty. Super catchy. Despite the sing-along quality, I'd call this streetpunk more so than Oi! I love it when bands prove me wrong. Excellent record. (KK)
(Wanda)

GŪTARA KYŌ – 10"

GŪTARA KYŌ ("Crazy Slovenlies" in English!) pins those VU meters to the farthest right, taking sharp, slashing punk guitars and makin' them bleed all over throbbing', propulsive rhythms. Nine tunes in around fifteen minutes, my chums. The band takes no breaths, yet leaves the listener panting like hell. In terms of reckless abandon, KING BROTHERS seem to be an obvious comparison, though GŪTARA KYŌ's songs may be easier to cling to, relentless as their attack is. The entire offering is careening, wild punk, capably and urgently delivered in way that seems quintessentially Japanese. They're purported to be an absolutely lethal live band too, which I believe we'll experience here in the US at some point in 2018. (MC)
(Slovenly)

HAND & LEG – "Hand & Leg" LP

A duo from Greece that latches onto warm fuzzy grooves (see WHITE BOSS / MILK MUSIC) on the first song but more garage or maybe even old school post punk New York than punk or hardcore. The pace picks back up and I'm reminded of other infamous two-pieces like XYX...But if XYX had more nasally vocals and was less into psychedelics. Their first crack at a slow song feels like drudgery ("Bananas") but their second attempt ("Dave Von Ronk") hits its mark and officially crosses the threshold into toe tapper territory. That's just the first four songs. As this thing goes on there's so much to latch onto, which is particularly impressive since their songs are so stylistically minimal. The more constraints one puts on oneself the more creative you're forced to be. That they can play minimalist repetitive (and good) riffs with enough swagger to keep them palatable is cool. Sometimes it sounds like a punker (read: better) version of the WHITE STRIPES or BEAT HAPPENING. If you've ever bought anything on S-S Records you'll likely like this. It's wonderfully all over the place. (P$)
(Slovenly)

HARAM – "بس ربحت، خسرت When You Have Won, You Have Lost" LP

If you follow current punk / hardcore, you have likely heard of HARAM. Previous to this LP, HARAM released a killer demo and EP, gaining attention for their captivating live sets at several different festivals and on tour across Europe and the US. One of the first punk bands to sing completely in Arabic, the singer Nader has candidly shared his experience of state repression and surveillance as a Lebanese-American, first as a youth living in NY in the xenophobic aftermath of 9/11 and more recently with his output connected to HARAM. Hailing from New York, HARAM play ferocious and dark hardcore punk that is difficult to immediately compare to their contemporaries under the punk umbrella. On this record, HARAM seamlessly weave more straightforward fast and pissed moments into other more slower, darker, and possibly even psychedelic moments. The songwriting on this record is thoughtful as hell, with intriguing and unique intricacies woven throughout each song in a way that definitely kept me captivated. Whether it be jarring transitions, mesmerizing rhythms, shredding guitar solos, killer riffs (think DIE KREUZEN), great bass leads, cacophonous sounds, or the intense, agonized vocal delivery, this record will keep you guessing. I was especially pleasantly surprised with the songs that transitioned into a slower, heavier, and very rhythmic pace. These moments of successfully transitioning from fist-shaking hardcore punk to dissonant, slow, rhythmic and experimental moments brought UNA BÈSTIA INCONTROLABLE to mind, not in similarity of music but rather in the execution of bridging these gaps. I feel this is best captured in the transition between the songs "يبنل The Prophet" and "نيمحارلا توص Voice of the Hari'meen." This is a record punks will remember and look back on for several different reasons. HARAM truly feels like a welcome change, both musically and lyrically. While building off of the foundation of hardcore punk, they are able to push limits and experiment while so many others are often caught in a cycle of reproducing a specific moment of punk that has already come and gone. This record is fucking great and highly recommended. (BP)
(Toxic State / La Vida Es Un Mus)

HEAVY LIDS – "Bleed / No Reason"

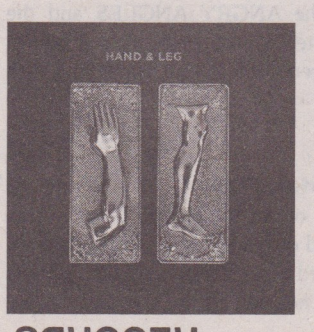
A NOLA band that has a bit of JAY REATARD vibe, featuring keyboards with thrashy guitars, but with a much more laidback singer. He sings all matter of factly while the band thrashes about manically. There is a new wavishness to the sound combined with a straight-up rock attitude. The catchiness of the two songs, particularly "No Reason," keeps this from sounding too derivative. There are members from STATIC STATIC, DIE ROTZZ and GARY WRONG GROUP included here as well. (CK)
(Big Neck)

HELTA SKELTA – "Nightclubbin'" EP

It's no secret that Australia has become something of a hotspot for exciting music in the last half-decade or so, and reliable Canadian imprint Deranged have managed to snag their own outfit. On this outing HELTA SKELTA come across like Mike Skinner from the STREETS fronting LOW LIFE or EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING; sardonic meditations on the mundane details of young male degenerate life, though perhaps not quite as clever or authentic as LOW LIFE. Perhaps your life was lacking an Antipodean ART BRUT? (I mean that as a compliment.) (AM)
(Deranged)

HEXIS – "XII" 10" + CD

Abysmal black chaos and hatred meet contemplative passages of slower diving chords. Sizzling vocals tell tales of woe and dread. What I like about HEXIS is their ongoing sound of darkness and despair that



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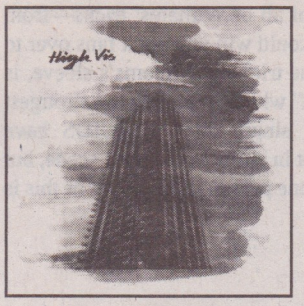
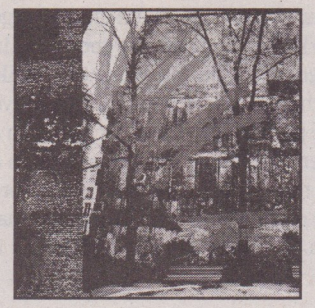




isn't played with stress or too much aggression, yet still manages to sound deadly as fuck. Psychotic blackened rumbling with lashings and licks of hardcore. The well-designed sleeve contains an additional CD of music as well. HEXIS return stickier than ever without any of the slime. This is rough and tactile blackened hardcore. (JR)
(Moment of Collapse)

HIGH VIS – "Luxor" EP

Side A starts outs in the realm of droning goth-punk but picks up the tempo for the verse. There's a pop element to it that combines with the kind of whiny, sung vocals to make it not so typical of the genre. It certainly does feel like it comes from a different decade though (if you guessed the '80s, then you are right). All of that isn't helped by the fact that if your chorus goes *"You spin right round, right round in my head,"* you are going to sound like DEAD OR ALIVE. The B-side starts out with a bass line (and tone) that sounds like early '80s CURE. It holds that vibe right up until the anthemic chorus, which is the real highlight of the record. It just sounds big and catchy out of nowhere, even with that fairly clean guitar tone. The record might even be worth it for just that one part. (PA)
(Farewell)

HIP PRIESTS / PAGANS – split EP

Man I love the fucking PAGANS. The recent passing of Mike Hudson is one of the great fucking tragedies that most of the square world won't even know about. But, damn, this record *blows*. Well I should say *blows* if you're a PAGANS fan as the UK's HIP PRIESTS wipe the floor with their recordmates here. Straight up, the PAGANS play some tired old man junkie dirge while the HIP PRIESTS belt out some over slick, super-tight rock'n'roll. Though I'd skip the whole bag if I were you. (RO)
(Just 4 Fun)

HUMMINGBIRD OF DEATH – "Forbidden Techniques" LP

Who out there is ready to shred? This band delivers some precise fastcore that darts around like a teenage hoodlum on two cans of Monster energy drink. Sounds like my heart might explode, or like FUCK ON THE BEACH and NO COMMENT, with some kind of super pro on the drums. They get almost death metal sometimes, but they are mostly just thrash as fuck! If you have ever even thought about getting a tattoo of the DRI circle pit guy, then you need to get this! (BA)
(To Live a Lie)

IF IT KILLS YOU / SONGS FOR SNAKES – split EP

IF IT KILLS YOU do one sort of slick sounding song that is somewhere between melodic post-hardcore and hard rock. Maybe a little more on the hard rock side of things, like something that would have been on late-night music television around the the year 2004. The vocals are sung and pretty heavily processed, the music is technically well played but tends to lack dynamics, and while the song sounds like it should be heavy, it doesn't necessarily feel that way. On the other side, SONGS FOR SNAKES aren't trying to fool you with that HÜSKER DÜ font. Up-tempo, poppy punk with melody, gravely vocals, and a bit of an edge. Even the song title ("Cobalt Blue") sounds like a HÜSKER DÜ song title. And while the song is very much in that vein, it also sounds like they have been heavily influenced by late-era JAWBREAKER. A bit too slick in general. (PA)
(self-released)

KALASHNIKOV COLLECTIVE – "Romantic Punk" LP

I distinctly remember someone recommending the *Vampirizzatri Oggi* EP a few years back, presenting Italy's KALASHNIKOV (alternately KALASHNIKOV COLLECTIVE) as a modern CONTROPOTERE. They aren't, and they are even less so now. What they are, however, is an insanely infectious outfit playing high energy, anthemic dance punk somewhere between WORLD / INFERNO FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY, MENUDO, and *Valley Girl*. But you see...it works. Maybe it can only work in Italian squats, but it fuckin' works. (WN)
(Kalashnikov Collective)

KENNY KENNY OH OH – "I Will Not Negotiate" LP

Nine spunky tunes from this Berlin / Leipzig group. The clear, well-balanced recording and genuine performance lend to a lively sound that many bands can't capture in the studio. These women play honest punk that is not sub-genera specific, which I think is a hard thing to pull off these days. The songs are direct and I'm hearing lots of great instrumental and vocal hooks—it's obvious that they spent the necessary time and effort to write great songs. I particularly like the relatable and defeatist lyrics to "That's Not a Day" and totally appreciate the sentiment in "Don't Put a Ring on It." Top it off with punks on scooters and we have ourselves an obvious top tenner. (MA)
(Abfall / Contraszt!)

KETTENHUND – "Mutter" EP

Four on the floor hard driving Austrian punk. Heavy like bricks, with forceful gruff vocals, infrequent (but excellent) guitar licks and a repetitive tempo / pace / delivery that becomes hypnotic (in a good way) after the first couple of tracks. (WN)
(Contergan Punk)

KOHTI TUHOA – "Pelon Neljäs Valtakunta" LP

This record sounds fucking amazing. I suppose it should, given the labels involved, but goddamn this thing just jumps off the platter and into your ears with a full sound that still retains a raw edge. A lot of that edge is to the credit of Helena, whose vocals are delivered with stunning live energy and ton of power. Every player sounds great here, especially the rich guitar sound and the bell-clear drums. The drumming is precise but not flashy (those fills though!), the riffing is meaty and unafraid of showing a bit of rock'n'roll swing when appropriate, and the rare leads are accomplished and punk-ily brief. For a Finnish band, KOHTI TUHOA do not exemplify any of the usual "Finnish hardcore" traits. Indeed, they have a lot more in common with modern Swedish hardcore, with some songs fitting very cleanly into the kång style of short, mean, and DISCHARGE-influenced, though others expand on

that palette or avoid it entirely. Standouts include the album-closing dirge "Jotain Sisältä Rikki" (every hardcore band has at least one good dirge in them if they really try) and the jumped-up rock'n'roll swing of "Meille On Valedeltu' and "Ei Pelastusta," which have a snappy melodic drive that recalls SILLA ELÉCTRICA. The packaging is swank as hell, with a heavy-duty tip-on sleeve and some very interesting artwork painted in a Renaissance religious style instead of the usual skulls'n'bullets hardcore fare. A very solid record with a couple of truly killer tracks and a few that just don't impress. It could have been an absolutely classic EP, but as it stands it's a very fine 12". (AU)
(Southern Lord / Svart)

KUUDES SILMA – "Pelko" LP

Finland's KUUDES SILMA play goth influenced post-punk along the lines of BELGRADO and SKELETAL FAMILY. In some of the heavier and darker bass / synth-led moments influences such as KILLING JOKE and SIEKIERA really shine through. This record feels more produced and polished than previous recordings and in certain moments with a more pop-sensibility, HURULA comes to mind. This record is full of somber and melodic guitar leads and dark, ambient synth that really completes the sound. As compared to many bands of this genre, KUUDES SILMA vocals are often much more aggressive which is something that sets them apart. Overall, I really enjoyed this record. The tempo, mood, and delivery of the songs varies throughout, from more upbeat and aggressive songs to the darker and ambient songs complemented by the presence of piano and even saxophone! The wheel isn't being reinvented here but if you are a fan of some of the aforementioned bands, you may really enjoy this LP. (BP)
(Svart)

LAPIN HELVETTI – LP

This was a pleasant surprise. I'm glad my lazy ass actually looked something up on the internet for once. This band is formed out of what remained of one of the most bitchin' bands ever—TERVEET KÄDET—and named after their last album. This ain't no *Rock Laahausta Vastaan* but what'd you expect? This is the much more metal sound they'd been spitting out for quite awhile but stripped down to some wonderful unapologetic blackened retro thrash. Like that good NUCLEAR ASSAULT album combined with MOB 47 sensibilities. Check it out, dummies. (RO)
(Svart)

LAUGHING STOCK – "Rough Crowd" EP

Whoa, these boys play it fast. Brand new five songer outta Boston, but I would've guessed California. The vocals are out front with that beachy melodic edge; at other times it kinda reminds me of UNIFORM CHOICE. The guitar leads are sick—I wish there were a few more of them. (GB)
(Not Like You)

LIQUIDS – "Heart Beats True" EP

Mat Williams is a magician. Only through necromancy and sorcery can one person summon the spirit of so many classic DIY bands throughout the years. This EP (originally self-released in hyper-limited form on tape in 2016) is a stellar run of all of Williams' tricks—from *Killed By Death* punkers to songs that could win pop punk fans over to the dark side. But the true gem, the true trick up Williams's sleeve, is the emotional ballad "Without A Doubt" which is among the strongest works he has produced. Like every single thing LIQUIDS have released, this is utterly essential, not just in terms of the NWI scene, but for DIY punk in general. To think that one person recorded all of this is truly astounding. (JD)
(Digital Regress)

LOWLIFE – "Leaders" EP

LOWLIFE!! Thee 1979 Canadian punk winner, reissued here for the first time in its original 7" format! A legendary EP first compiled on *Smash The State* and *Screaming Fists*, and unlike some of its Canuck counterparts, all three tracks are stone cold classics, with raw, in your face guitars and over the top vocals throughout. Definitely one to seek out. (GB)
(HoZac)

LUMPY AND THE DUMPERS – "Those Pickled Fuckers" LP

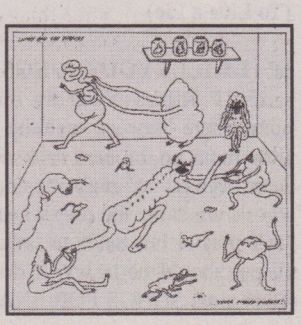
By now, everyone is familiar with this tribe's patented ooze and has been subsequently repulsed, blown away, or both by the general gooiness of it all. *Those Pickled Fuckers* though, damn. Next-level Freddy Krueger creeper punk...even for them! The slapstick grotesqueness remains upfront, lyrically and sonically, though things are heavier everywhere this go-around, kinda body-slamming *Huff My Sack* down a rung or two. "Clatter Song" and "Boiling River" have this gear-grind to them that recalls deathrock and the macabre, whereas "Attention" (really one of the top tunes I've heard this year) and "Someone's In The House" seem most in line with their top offerings to date. A near-perfect dose from their glands, I say. Those suspect or even weary of LUMPY's excretions really ought to give this one a probing...Turns out there's a lot more to see. (MC)
(Lumpy)

MARXBROS / TRAVØLTA – split LP

MARXBROS harken back to the turn of the millennium, bringing to mind first LP-era DS-13 (vocals especially), but if they'd doubled down even more on the blackbeats and were jazzed on UNDERDOG or similar NYHC riffs. TRAVØLTA are somewhat similar, but are a little more chuggy and technical with a distinct bass tone—I could see them both theoretically opening for pre-LP TRIAL in Europe or playing to a bunch of Carhartted folded arms in a basement in 2002. Both bands have lotsa tracks on their respective sides, and both are decent, but since this is a split, I gotta say that the winner is MARXBROS. (DG)
(To Live A Lie)

MEATWOUND – "Largo" LP

Monstrous slab from these Florida adults. MEATWOUND harness some of the tonnage that Florida is known for (FLOOR, CAVITY, TORCHE) and deliver it with a groove that sometimes sounds like KARP reborn...And sometimes it just sounds like you're about to get



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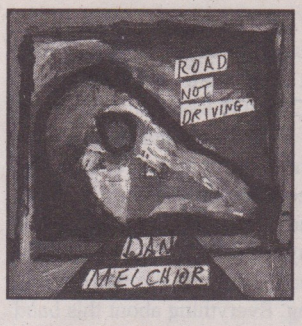

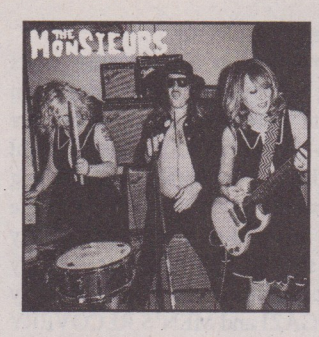

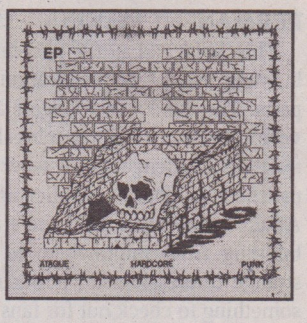

your ass handed to you. This is vicious in a way that only lifelong outsiders should be able to create or truly understand, and with appropriately administered volume, the effect is deadly. For listeners who like their heaviness dark and their punishment in the form of repetition. (WN)
(Magic Bullet)

DAN MELCHIOR – "Road Not Driving" LP

I miss DAN MELCHIOR the garage rocker. His voice sounds so nice backed by some simple, distorted guitar riffs. This LP starts off promisingly with "I Got A Feeling" which sounds like one of those BROKE REVUE tunes. Then the song goes on too long and things get broken down. The rest of the music on this is more what I expect from Melchior in 2017. The songs are soundscapes with acoustic guitars and Melchior's spoken word vocals. The lyrics are interesting and occasionally funny. (CK)
(Ever/Never)

MIRAGE – "Erasure / Oslo"

MIRAGE waste no time diving directly into a deep, darkwave groove. With their dramatic vocals and high production value, these tracks would blend seamlessly into a goth night DJ set between JOY DIVISION and CHRISTIAN DEATH. The lyrics are mostly in German so you'd very likely believe it was an international classic you'd somehow missed. MIRAGE's consistently unnerving chord progressions amid a solid backdrop of straightforward mid-tempo drumming will keep you zoned out and dancing into oblivion, where you belong. (HB)
(Svart)

THE MONSIEURS – "Deux" LP

Isn't there some saying about ugly record covers and great records? Here's a case in point. The two women on this cover look very nice, but front and center is a shirtless guy (the singer I assume) with his beer belly hanging out and his lips pursed supporting a creepy pencil mustache. On second thought, the cover is kind of funny. It definitely catches your eye. The music on the other hand is great. It's distorted, angry, catchy garage punk. The MONSIEURS' first LP is one of my favorites. I know this one will be too. (CK)
(Slovenly)

MURO – "Ataque Hardcore Punk" 12"

Colombian punk on a Norwegian label. Isn't international DIY punk a beautiful thing? First things first: the packaging of this record is gorgeous! The bricks / barbed wire / skull combo may sound predictable, but they're laid out in an unsuspecting and aesthetically pleasing way here, and the sleeve and poster are lovingly hand-screened. On the surface these Colombian punks do a recognizable contemporary pogo style, but deeper listens reveal variety (like the cool deviance in timing on the intro to "Víctimas"). On top of the beat drumming keeps things urgent, while the tortured vocal style conveys desperation and disgust. Fans of TERCER MUNDO should flip their shit over this. I'm so happy the punx are upped. (MA)
(Byllepest)

NAKAM – "Nichts" EP

This one sounds like it could be some lost '80s US hardcore band, except they are from Germany today. If SIEGE were listening to Oi! and hanging out with MINOR THREAT. I can get down with that! They also get extra points for the singer's extra raspy shout. This is fucking sick, so check it out! (BA)
(Kink / Spastic Fantastic)

NASALROD – "Building Machines" LP

What would you expect from a band called NASALROD?! I certainly didn't realize bands like this still existed. From the Northwest, I can definitely hear some grunge going on, but with a funky and off-time freak-vibe. Features Spit Stix of FEAR on drums, and you can hear it right up front in the mix. Someone must like this music, but I just remember having to sit through bands like this in the '90s waiting to hear the headliner at whatever rock club. On crazy maroon splatter vinyl. (GB)
(Nadine)

NIGHT WITCH – "Discography" 12"

Highly recommended and extremely relevant US hardcore. Sonically raw and musically to the point, whether in the more disjointed constructions like "Why Am I Here?" or the dancefloor steamers like "Witch Hunt." But it's the sum of parts that really makes this slab shine. NIGHT WITCH lyrics are blunt, honest, and uncompromising, addressing privilege, assault and fear with equal passion, and addressing everything with a personal intensity borne out in the words and the explanations that accompany them. Every now and then you come across a record that really kicks you in the ass and reminds you what a passionate hardcore punk record is really supposed to sound like...This is one of those records. Also, bonus points for (apparently?) lathe cutting this thing onto a *Scarface* laser disc? Well played, NIGHT WITCH, in every aspect. (WN)
(Pocket Cat)

PELKOTILA – "Pelon Ilmpiiri" LP

This is some driving hardcore crust out of Finland. When I put this on, the first thing that came to my mind was AUS-ROTTEN, with the galloping beat, and the high, low trade off vocals. They've also got a bit of the epic TRAGEDY thing going on, but they use it well, crafting heavy as fuck crust rippers. To top it all off there's even a song dedicated to Lemmy. If you're a crust freak, this one's for you! (BA)
(self-released)

PERIKATO – "Kuka Hyötyy?" LP

Here is some total fucking raw noise punk, fucking madness straight outta Finland!! With barely intelligible, yet crushing riffs, rough blasting drums, and urgent shouting, this is about as bare bones as it gets, with a bit of '80s gnarliness thrown in. If you like flushing music symbols down the toilet, and blasting LÄRM and CHAOS UK at the same time, then this one's for you. (BA)
(Svart)

PERMANENT MAKEUP – "Scrape" LP

This bold and gritty post-hardcore release is held together at its bursting seams by consistent rumbling bass lines and unorthodox drum parts. The band's two singers alternate between lilting post-hardcore vocals and scream-spoken breakdown-style declarations. Instrumental tangents challenge the listener to either get immersed in disturbing psychedelic loops or get alienated and walk away. The track "Desperate Adults" showcases the band's ability to wield repeating riffs, slowly building from minimalism to total sensory overload, accented by strange impressionistic political lyrics. It sounds like art. Definitely something to check out for fans of FUGAZI and MEN'S RECOVERY PROJECT. (HB)
(Dead Tank / IFB / No Clear)

POCKET FISHRMAN – "The Greatest Story Ever Told" LP

If you've ever looked at old BUTTHOLE SURFERS flyers, chances are you've seen this band's moniker adorning one or more of them. They emerged from the second wave druggy, arty Texas punk scene that spawned bands like ED HALL and the FUCK EMOS but unlike those bands, I don't think they spent much time hanging in the San Francisco punker hell of the late '80s / early '90s. It's too bad because they share some of the goofy pop sensibilities of bands like the RESIDENTS or PSYCHOTIC PINEAPPLE. Anyway this is all you would ever need to hear from this band, filling an LP and enclosed CD with a career-spanning cavalcade of punky goofy drunken slop. Included are tracks from the only release of theirs I own (and favorite of John Peel) *The Leader Is Burning*, which is on the better side of things here. Much of this is too silly for my taste. Check out a rarely heard slab of Texas punk history and decide for yourself. (RO)
(Saustex)

PRETTIEST EYES – "Pools" LP

PRETTIEST EYES is a synthy garage punk band from Los Angeles. The singer reminds me a lot of JOHN DWYER. As such they have a THEE OH SEES meets DEVO style. The music is on the artier side and the vocals are plaintive and fervent. The songs take their time and spread out the sounds in a luxurious way. I want to kick back, close my eyes, and take it in. It sounds pretty cool. (CK)
(Castle Face)

PUBLIC EYE – "Relaxing Favorites" LP

AUTISTIC YOUTH switched instruments and reinvented themselves. They sound more Australian now, like they could be affiliated with the people from TOTAL CONTROL, UV RACE, RAT COLUMNS, etc. but with their catchy hook-writing ability still intact. That shines in particular on songs like "Bad Dream." Plus it's still punk. There's a little bit of that snarl. That's all I really wanted, just to taste a little of that punk snarl. Just a spoonful—no need to overdo it. I'd go see them live and buy a shirt. This is a big league winner, they're going to take care of your ears, believe me! Winning again! (P$)
(Best Before)

RACE RIOT 59 – "Punk Rock Gang" LP

If you have to add two numbers to your band name to differentiate yourselves from a white power band, that is a problem. If you state in an interview that you named your band RACE RIOT 59 because "it would bum people out who didn't understand it" and then not help anyone understand it, that is also a problem. These dudes from Youngstown, OH play gruff-throated, repetitive streetpunk that is mostly about fighting, cops, racism (anti), partying, and fighting some more. There's really nothing to set them apart from any other basic streetpunk / Oi! band in the world (which, personally, is how I want all of my streetpunk to be), but the overall effect is just boring. Everything about this band feels dodgy and catered towards violent, toxic machismo. (GH)
(Contra / Crowd Control)

RAZOR BOYS – LP

Holy hell, HoZac with another winner this month!! From Atlanta's first punk band RAZOR BOYS!! I've long been a fan of the XYZ *Wolf Spider* single, a proto-punk / hard rock hybrid from 1979. Turns out that band recorded a full LP a year earlier in 1978, just unearthed some 40 years later, and released under their real name RAZOR BOYS?! This is great raw and heavy overblown glam punk of the highest order! Fuck junkshop glam, there weren't any label hacks taming their blasted sounds in the studio. This is some real heavy shit. Sure, you could throw out some comparisons like SLADE (duh!) or Stateside counterparts from a few years later like RATT or CRUE, but the truth is none of those bands recorded demos like this in the '70s. The only thing missing is the amazing flip to the XYZ single, "Long Distance." If you are into glam or '70s punk, you need this. (GB)
(HoZac)

RUE MORGUE – "Maailmanpalo" EP

Helsinki's RUE MORGUE offer up three songs of polished post-punk on this EP. The bass tone sounds as if they ripped it right out of the studio where the CURE recorded *Pornography*. While the mood of the music feels polished, compressed, and nearly robotic at times (too controlled), the vocals lend a much-needed feeling of aggression to all three songs on here. Vocals are layered and heavily reverbed to great effect. There are some deathrock vibes, but they mostly lean towards aggressive post-punk. (GH)
(Svart)

SEVEN CROWNS – "Lightning Rod" LP

I'll generally give any record with "his evilness" lord Lucifer blazed on the cover half a nod but this is not cutting it or worthy of the goat lord in any way. I guess this would fall loosely into the hardcore category but it's way too rock and slick for me, like a cross between REFUSED and SYSTEM OF A DOWN (not that I have any idea what those bands even sound like). If you're looking for a soundtrack for your next baby killing look elsewhere. (RO)
(Negative Press)

SFH – "Kinda Suck" LP

The insert closes with "nothing hip or cutting edge, just punk rock." That about sums it up. I feel like these guys have been around forever.

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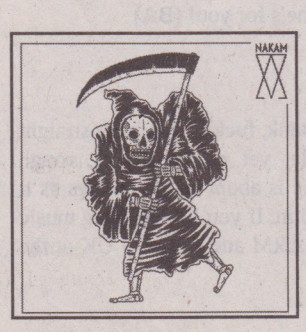

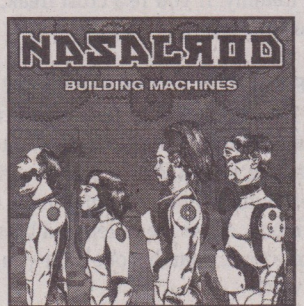

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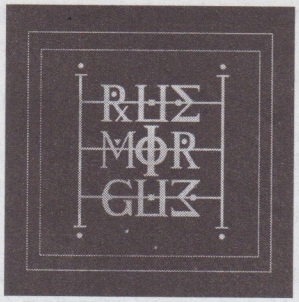
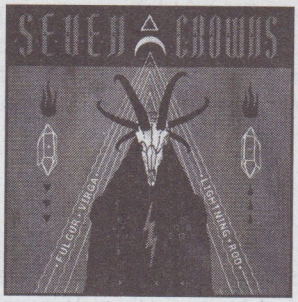
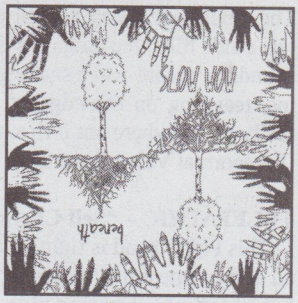






Anyway, this really is straightforward punk rock. It's melodic and catchy, just like the Canadians like it. It's not hardcore. It's also not really '77 style punk. It's kind of in-between. There's nothing new about this, but if you're a fan of the band or just a fan of solid punk rock, you'll enjoy this one. There are a couple of standout tracks. "Kinda Sucks" is a great one about the one that got away even though she was right there in front of you the whole time. "Donald Trump Is an Asshole" needs no explanation. (KK)
(Ugly Pop)

SKULL CULT – "Vol. 1 + Vol. 2" EP

Trick-or-treating on a sugar high, drum machines and keyboards and guitars all moving at breakneck speed (for the most part). This pummels with a big goof stupid. Do you wish CONEHEADS played spooky synthpunk? Two wildly popular tapes now on vinyl. You have arrived. (MM)
(Erste Theke Tonträger)

SLOW WOW – "Beneath" LP

Bass heavy post-punk, with resonant Siouxsie-esque vocals that at times veer off into the realm of Karen Oh, SLOW WOW paints with broad dark strokes, and undeniably sounds like GRIT, minus the pop musings. Palatable post-punk—interpret that however you like. (CR)
(Carbonated Sounds)

THE STALLION – "The Dark Side Of The Wall" 3xLP

It's probably best to confirm the particulars at the outset. Yes, this is Ben and Alistair from COUNTRY TEASERS reinterpreting PINK FLOYD's *The Wall* in its massive entirety. Let that sink in for a bit. Now...Reverence for the album aside, it's bewildering to think about what would possess these gents to dedicate the time and effort to tackle this project, but the results are just as inexplicable and impressive as what initially inspired them. The album is presented as an often-harsh, always-compelling brand of twitchy synth keys, noisy drum sprocketry and optimally arranged guitar work, usually alternating between subdued sweetness and jarring outbursts. The reimagining itself is a piss-take, honoring and improving-upon all at once, entirely unpredictable and engaging across all six sides (no lies!). The STALLION's overall take is nearly bursting with ideas, moving from absurdity to provocation, bitterness to tenderness, with insanely great production and execution side to side. Familiarity with the source material may enrich things, sure, but it's my no means a requirement. Their takes on "Mother" and "Young Lust" absolutely fuckin' astonish regardless, to name a few. There's so much quality and puzzlement to reckon with here that one could get lost, a great byproduct that I'm currently grappling with. Major kudos to the STALLION for their drive and for so thoroughly nailing it, as well as to In The Red for assembling and releasing such a gargantuan and highly irregular release. Definitely not for the faint of heart or weak of will, but curious parties will be knocked out by more than a few moments. A real jaw-dropper! (MC)
(In The Red)

THE SUBURBAN HOMES – "Unemployed / Anxiety Attack"

The very straightforward sounds of being anxious and unemployed recorded to directly to tape in suburban Sussex. Lo-fi minimalist punk with clean guitars done right. Can you capture a feeling? Have you ever seen the rain? *Yeah*. Good stuff to add to their already steady stream of suburb slayers. This is how I feel on public transit. This is how I feel waiting in line. Have you ever *seen* the rain? (P$)
(Total Punk)

SUICIDE – "First Rehearsal Tapes" LP

I am assuming the readership of *MRR* has heard the first SUICIDE LP at this point, and has an idea of what this could sound like as a result. Let's just say it's not like your or my band's first rehearsal tapes…Truly wild otherworldly sounds recorded in 1975, reminiscent of the *Forbidden Planet* soundtrack reset for the decaying streets of NYC. The music is unearthly, ethereal, and repulsive; strange sounds that come in and out of focus; a blurred vision you can't quite make sense of which makes it more surreal in its dark beauty...Molecular dirt sound, city streets, paranoia, beauty, death, those synths evoking ghosts of doo-wop and girl group dreams shattered with love in the streets. An industrial vision of what is possible, of what dreams sound like; Vega's whispered incantations feel like instructions and meditations. Listening to this in a dark room on headphones is very transportative. This came out on a CD with the second SUICIDE LP a few years ago, and it's good to finally hear its sinister whispers and tonalities and appreciate it on its own terms on this reissue. The cover photo should be a poster for all our collective bedrooms. (LG)
(Superior Viaduct)

SURFBORT – "Bort to Death" EP

Simple, raw and snotty punk that will make you mosh your brains out. These Brooklyn "kids" have an early-L.A. vibe to their sound, something like GERMS meets Dangerhouse. Much like a less complex NEIGHBORHOOD BRATS, but with an equal amount of chaos and attitude. Fun, brutal and urgent. This is punk for people not burnt out on "punk." Awesome! (FS)
(HoZac)

SUSPECT PARTS – LP

Self-described as "Apocalypse Pop," this is a tight 25 minutes of bubblegum power pop. Not a lot of new tricks, not a lot of innovation, but a lot of teeth-rottingly sugary goodness. It's like if the ARCHIES had seen the BUZZCOCKS. "She Gives Me Something to Sing About" is a good song to dance awkwardly on a beach to. (RH)
(Oops Baby / Taken By Surprise)

TAIL FROM THE CRYPT – "La Danse De Sacrificial" EP

Spooky and partially in French (though they appear to be from Michigan), the first side runs the gamut between tremolo-heavy BAUHAUS graveyard rock to a pretty lazy CRAMPS rip-off helmed by Count Chocula. The B-side starts off with a caveman shake that features a pretty weird guitar squeak that starts to get it a little weirder.

The album ends with a freak jammer hit "Babies," which is possibly just a side filler, but damn it's good. Backward vocals, panning squelch sounds, a square-wave snaking in to dominate, occasional guitar slip-ins, teetering on the edge of a mishmash sound collage...It doesn't really go anywhere but it rips. (MM)
(Paranormal Video Cassettes)

TELEPATHIC – "Self Checkout" LP

This Philly band is right up my alley. It's catchy, melodic and fuzzy, all at the same time. At times it's as smooth as room temperature butter, but other times, they get a little stilted. And they weave the male / female vocals to perfection. Bands like 'O' LEVEL, DEVO, and maybe even WIRE come to mind. Yeah, it's part punk, part pop, and part new wave. I'm a fan of lo-fi production, and I think it works particularly well here. This one is worth the extra effort it might take to find. (KK)
(Third Uncle)

THUG BOOTS – "The Movement" EP

THUGS BOOTS play stripped-down punk with a seemingly heavy influence of '80s Boston-style hardcore and Oi! Think equal parts SLAPSHOT and STARS AND STRIPES (without the shitty anti-immigrant lyrics). Pissed off, mid-tempo, driving riffs, and gang vocals complete with an American flag, a bulldog, and a WARZONE cover. (BP)
(Crowd Control)

TIGER TOUCH – "Rabbit Grab / Can't Make It On Time"

I was ready to trash this one from the shitty name and dad-like band photos on the back but this Portland band play a nice and humble mix of MC5 rockin' swagger and late '70s British motorcycle riding heavy metal. "Rabbit Grab" is the clear winner with its GIRLSCHOOL tempos. And sure, the other tune lifts some STONES lyrics but it ain't too bad neither. Can't judge a book…blahhhh. (RO)
(Tyrannical Volts)

TIMMY'S ORGANISM – "Eating Colors" LP

Our immortal leader, our beloved "Cave-Man Astro-Nut Martian," TIMMY VULGAR returns with his intergalactic mercenary army to stun punks of all stripes with his incomparable brand of alien rock'n'roll. *Eating Colors* is a confident, all-guns-blazing album, stewing the degenerate toughness of CLONE DEFECTS and the twitching experimentalism of HUMAN EYE into a unique and mutant take on very heavy rock. Titanic in scope and sound, *Eating Colors* also thankfully sheds new light on the outer-space samurai guitar of VULGAR, an aspect of his arsenal / artistry I've always felt was under-celebrated. Hell, this his most prolific group to date and I still feel TIMMY'S ORGANISM is unjustly flying under too many radars. Let all that ignorance go up in green flames and seek out *Eating Colors* immediately. Here and always, Timmy and his Organism are absolute muthas—a ten-story, three-headed cyclops wielding a club that bashes in brains, time and space. Essential and punkier than purple puke. (MC)
(Detroit Magnetic Tape Co.)

TUSENSKÖNA / UTÖ – split EP

Short and sweet little ripper from Finland. While UTÖ had a pretty cool '90s style with some sort of aggressive, melodic, alternative vibe, it was TUSENSKÖNA that really nailed it for me. This sounds like they have heard, and loved, early KOLLAA KESTÄÄ. This is kinda like a stoney grampa laying down mellow solos over some HÜSKER DÜ type shit, and it is totally fuckin' killer. (DZ)
(Svart)

UNIFORM – "No Trending" LP

Monotone vocal intonations over this crazy guitar sound that is sort of flanged out but the riffs remind me of the MONORCHID?! A weird sorta goth FALL sound results! Parts of it reminds me of later period UNWOUND—they share a similar textural guitar sound. At the same time I can imagine this band playing with CHRISTIAN DEATH in 1982. I am not sure if they are going for a deathrock thing, because it's definitely not a by the numbers Punk Trend™ take on that ideal. It certainly doesn't sound like they are about to release the bats or something. It makes me think of the HC youth of OC realizing the tide is changing fast and they are going to need to dye their clothes black and get into RUDIMENTARY PENI. The lyrics are a desperate sprawl of post-apocalyptic ramblings on our technological addictions and identities. Desolate sounds for desolate times. (LG)
(Scavenger of Death / State Laughter)

U-NIX – "Star" EP

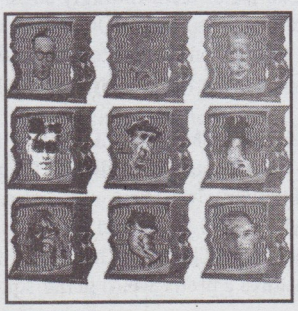
Finally another fuckin' hardcore record on Lumpy! Portland, Oregon's U-NIX pump through five fast blasts of wild and raging fury, with all five of the songs featuring wildly dynamic riffs and song structures. One of the best releases on Lumpy since...well...Q and NOSFERATU! Don't sleep on this. (JD)
(Lumpy)

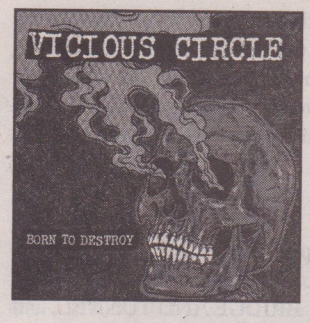
UNRULY BOYS – "Bloodshot" EP

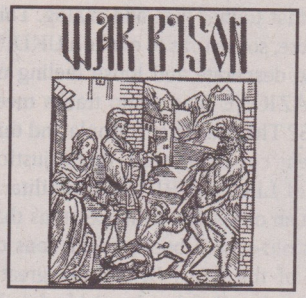
The cover of this record basically gives away the sound. Grizzled, villainous-looking skinheads mutilating cops with the band's name drawn out in Old English lettering serves as the perfect visual component to the sounds contained therein: powerful hardcore that's heavily Oi!-influenced, but also has an air of modern noisiness running through it. Mostly mid-paced and stompy, though not without fast moments that I do wish were more numerous. Most of the song and riff-writing is above average, and while the last couple of songs get too into anthemic street rock territory, I can hang with the rest. (DG)
(Border City / Crowd Control)

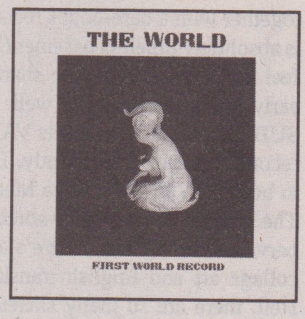
VANILLA POPPERS – LP

The first thing that this record has going for it is that none of the songs are longer than two minutes. The second thing is that they all rule. At the base level, VANILLA POPPERS play unrelenting, breathless, 4/4 style, blown-out punk. The rawness and rock riffs give it a garage-y feel, but everything is played with a hardcore energy, as if they're all tripping on the same insane coffee buzz. The singer almost sounds like she's about to blow









out her vocal cords from pushing so hard and everything is mixed well into the red. It's rare that a record catches a band on top of their game and giving everything they've got, but VANILLA POPPERS made it happen. (GH)
(Lumpy)

VIETNAM HARDCORE – "Call Me A Vampire" EP

Old school hardcore punk from San Diego. I would love to ask this band why they're called VIETNAM HARDCORE, as it seems a bit misleading. Anyway, this record makes me feel like I just went back in time and found myself at a hardcore show in the '80s. I'm really glad these guys are keeping this shit going. Kind of reminds me of early Dischord bands with a touch of a SoCal vibe, like MINOR THREAT meets CIRCLE JERKS. Not the most original stuff but who needs originality when you know something's good the way it is? I'll keep an eye out to see if they're playing in the Bay any time soon. (DB)
(Die Cast)

VICIOUS CIRCLE – "Born To Destroy" LP

Skate punk from Australia. Seething vocals similar to a lot of '80s metal and hardcore. *Born To Destroy* has a lot of streetwise attitude, intertwining political and social themes. The entire LP is immediately accessible, but unique enough to reinforce a play this long. Catchy changes keep it illuminated with enough density to keep it heavy. This album really wants you to hang your head down, in the pit. (JR)
(Goatsound)

WAR BISON – "Self Crucified" EP

Damn, this band is new to me, despite existing in my backyard. I hear a lot of late '80s NYHC that's neither metal nor youth crew, and think this band would have hypothetically been the most at home on the *New Breed* comp. Vocal comparisons to BANE in terms of intonation and delivery are unavoidable, though I actually like this band, including their vocals. The songs do go on a *little* too long, and the guitar leads can get dramatic and tiresome, but it's fine. (DG)
(self-released)

WEAK TIES – LP

Bielefeld, Germany's WEAK TIES brings it hard on their debut LP, laying down a light framework of powerviolence, but not letting it hold them down to the constraints of one genre. The guitar is cleaner than your average hardcore band, giving it more depth and (oddly) more strength at times. The band flops around between powerviolence, youth crew-style hardcore breakdowns, dissonant punk and, when all else fails, blast beats. Don't let this lazy reviewing fool you though: there is no failure in this LP and there is no flopping. Their singer is fucking vicious, screaming her fucking head off about the utter shittiness of this world and the band plays each note with nothing less than total conviction. Excellent! (GH)
(Contraszt!)

WHIMM – "A Stare Ajar" LP

How well one receives this record will likely be related to how much they have listened to BEHAVIOR's *Bitter Bitter* LP, also released this year. This is not to say that the first full-length by Toronto's WHIMM is bad, but *A Stare Ajar* hits so close to the mark left by *Bitter Bitter* that comparison is unavoidable. Roughly, this is languid, droning post-punk. What makes it so effective is the airy quality, both to the sparse arrangements, but also in the production of the record. There's so much space around these songs that they feel ice cold and very distant. It's great, but it was also great at the end of the spring when BEHAVIOR did the exact same thing. To be fair there are more riffs on the WHIMM LP, alongside the open guitar strumming / droning. Both bands have an arty viciousness to them and if this is the sign of a trend forming, I am very excited indeed. (LP)
(Pleasence)

THE WORLD – "The First World Record" LP

Skeletal, danceable art punk that sounds like 1979. This LP truly makes me happy to exist in the face of the noise and hell that was 2017. Just the fact that the WORLD can make beautiful frantic songs that make art and pleasure out of the degradations of modern life... The consumer culture where you are a server or being served, a feudal brutality of slumlords and desperate renters, wealthy yoga drones, and those stuck serving such figures, the smug public glooping the streets of the Bay Area thanks to the tech explosion, the feeling of being reduced to a piece of human furniture in an immediate gratification death spiral...This is an antidote to that: the sound of kicks that are being had somewhere after shift, the nervous energy, the tough seductive delivery, rhythmic dissent, smart remarks, wired up guitars and bongos and sax! Dreamscape sounds that fall somewhere between "C30, C60, C90 Go!" and some teenage band in 1978 that wants to be BRIAN ENO and SWELL MAPS. Smart radical music that makes it impossible to stay still, in your mind or on your feet. MAXIMUM JOY, RIP RIG AND PANIC stripped down to nothing, bare parts that are all you need to make a propulsive powerful all consuming LP for desperate girls and desolate boys and all those that fall in between. Fucking classic! (LG)
(Lumpy / Upset the Rhythm)

WVRM – "Can You Hear the Wind Howl" EP

Here's a grim little slab of crust-ridden grindcore out of South Carolina. This is the kind of band that reminds us that Armageddon is right around the corner, and gives us a little sonic taste of what's to come. The kind of band that conjures images of fiery tank warfare at night, like TERRORIZER, or BOLT THROWER. Bleak metal freaks take note! (BA)
(To Live a Lie)

YDINASEETON POHJOLA – "Synnyt, Kärsit, Kuolet, Unohdut" 12"

Holy motherfucking shit, this is fucking blazing! I am legitimately angry that I haven't heard this band before! Obviously (look at that name and title!) this is a Finnish hardcore band and goddamn are they an amazing one. The tracks are short, vicious and pissed à la BASTARDS or KAAOS, with amazing, neurotic, and painful-sounding vocals over it all. Tons of feedback, shitty borrowed-equipment guitar tone, slimy bass oozing under it all with ultra simple 1-2 drumming holding it all

together with a bare-bones recording that sounds nice and analog. This is absolutely timeless basement hardcore, so basic as to evoke a UKDIY feel but at the same time sharing the desperate and loose feeling of early Italian hardcore as well. NEGAZIONE tape comp tracks meet SUBURBAN FILTH meets VARAUS? That's a killer formula and this record executes it brilliantly. Excellent covers as well, doing justice to both BAYONET's "The Meaning of Life" and RIP's "Antimilitar." The graphic design is top-notch, with an obsession with skeletons that pervades throughout, There's a thick old-school booklet with tons of collage art and English translations of the lyrics (which are great). Hell, there are so many skeletons that the label head and his family sent a letter about the record with adorable hand-drawn skeletons on the back side! The liner notes indicate that these tracks were recorded over a long stretch of time (2013–2016), and I can only say that I am thrilled that this record we completed and released because it is easily one of the best records I've been randomly assigned this year and is a sleeper candidate for a best of 2017 slot. Fans of Finnish hardcore past and present and anybody who can enjoy raw-as-fuck hardcore punk would do very well indeed to track this fucker down. Highest recommendation. (AU)
(Nightstick Justice)

YLEISET SYYT – "Ajatuskoneisto" LP

Don't let the raw and slightly ramshackle aural presentation fool you. Listen through the sharp crack of the treble-heavy room mics on the drums, through the guitars cranked through tiny amps creating a midrange buzz that can so easily get lost amongst the hollow drums and washed out cymbals...And then you can really check out what these Finns have to offer. Tight and urgent high energy hardcore with a tension that is magnified exponentially by the specific recording qualities I just mentioned, with fiercely gruff (and, I dare say, Finnish) vocals keeping everything on edge. The title track and the A-side closing creamer "Typeryyden Ylistys" are the two choice tracks, but there's not a clunker in the bunch—and I strongly recommend going back to listen to the first couple of tracks after your earholes get warmed up to the exceptionally hot and raw sounds in the grooves. Certified banger status. (WN)
(Svart)

YOUNG LADIES – "Something Simple" EP

YOUNG LADIES is a pop punk band from Brooklyn featuring members of MONIKERS, DISCOUNT, BRIDGE AND TUNNEL, and LATTERMAN. Weird choice of name for a band of all dudes though. Four songs altogether, two on each side. Most of the songs are poppy and mid-tempo. The last track is pretty slow but has a good melody. You can tell this band is super talented and has a lot of experience writing good and catchy songs. Sweet release for us pop punx! (DB)
(Dead Broke)

CONTACTS

20 Buck Spin: 20buckspin.com, mailorder@20buckspin.com
Abfall: abfall-records.bandcamp.com, abfall-records@web.de
Almost Ready: almostreadyrecords.com
Bald Punk: barbedwirebraces.bandcamp.com
Beggars: beggarsohio.bandcamp.com
Best Before: bestbeforerecords.storenvy.com
Big Neck: 39877 Thomas Mill Rd, Leesburg, VA 20175, bigneckrecords.com
Byllepest: byllepestdistroofficial.bandcamp.com
Carbonated Sounds: carbonatedsounds.bandcamp.com, carbonatedsounds@gmail.com
Castle Face: castlefacerecords.com
Collision Course: PO Box 865, Hermosa Beach, CA 90254, collisioncourserecords.com
Contergan Punk: conterganpunk@gmx.de
Contra: contra-records.com
Contraszt!: diyordie.net, info@diyordie.net
Crowd Control Media: 8504 Firestone Blvd #391, Downey, CA 90241, crowdcontrolmedia.net
Crown And Thorn: crownandthornltd.com
Dead Broke: 139 Huber Ave, Holbrook, NY 11741, deadbrokerec@gmail.com, deadbrokerecords.com
Dead Broke: deadbrokerecords.com
Dead Tank: deadtankrecords.com, deadtank@gmail.com
Deranged: c/o Gordon Dufresne, 2700 Lower Road, Roberts Creek, BC V0N 2W4, CANADA, derangedrecords.com
Destructure: destructure.bandcamp.com
Detroit Magnetic Tape: lo-beholdreleases.bandcamp.com
Digital Regress: digitalregress.com, digitalregress@gmail.com
Erste Theke Tonträger: erstetheketontraeger.blogspot.de
Ever/Never: evernever-records.bandcamp.com
Farewell: farewellrecs.bigcartel.com
Future Storms: futurestorms.bandcamp.com
Goatsound: goatsound.com
Heel Turn: heelturnrecords.com, heelturnrecords@gmail.com
HoZac: hozacrecords.com, hozacrecords@gmail.com
IFB: ifbrecords.com, ifbrecords@gmail.com
If It Kills You: ifitkillsyou.com
In The Red: PO Box 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90050, intheredrecords.com, info@intheredrecords.com
Inflammable Material: inflammablematerial.bigcartel.com
Just 4 Fun: just4funrecords.bigcartel.com
Kalashnikov Collective: kalashni.net
Kink: kink-records.de
La Vida Es Un Mus: lavidaesunmus.com
Lumpy: Spottedrace.bigcartel.com
Magic Bullet: magicbulletrecords.com, info@magicbulletrecords.com
Moment of Collapse: momentofcollapse.com
Nadine: nadinerecords.com, nadine.records@gmail.com
Nasalrod: nasalrod.com nasalrod@gmail.com
Nightstick Justice: nightstickjustice.com
No Clear: noclearrecords.blogspot.com
Not Like You: 102 Richmond Dr. SE Albuquerque, NM 87106, notlikeyourecords.com
Not Normal: notnormaltapes.bandcamp.com
Oops Baby: oopsbabyrecords.com
Pleasence: pleasencerecords.com
Pocket Cat: pocketcatrecords.storenvy.com
Saustex: saustex.com
Scavenger of Death: scavengerofdeath.storenvy.com
Screaming Babies: facebook.com/ScreamingBabiesRecords/
Seven Crowns: sevencrowns.bandcamp.com
Slovenly: slovenly.com
Songs for Snakes: songsforsnakes.bandcamp.com
Southern Lord: southernlord.com
Spastic Fantastic: spasticfantastic.de
Superdreamer: superdreamerrecords.com
Superior Viaduct: www.superviaduct.com
Svart: svartrecords.com
Tail From The Crypt: tailfromthecrypt.bandcamp.com
Taken By Surprise: takenbysurpriserecords.wordpress.com
Third Uncle: thirdunclerecords.com
Tiger Touch: facebook.com/tigertouchpdx/
To Live A Lie: 2825 Van Dyke Ave, Raleigh, NC 27607, tolivealie.com
Total Punk: floridasdying.com
Toxic State: 192 Jefferson St. #1R, Brooklyn, NY 11206, toxicstaterecords@gmail.com
Ugly Pop: uglypop.bigcartel.com
Upset The Rhythm: upsettherhythm.co.uk
Vietnam Hardcore: vietnamhardcore.bandcamp.com
Wanda: wandarecords.de
War Bison: warbison.bandcamp.com

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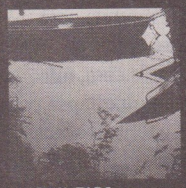
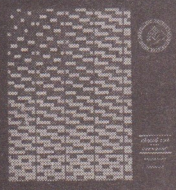


WEAK TIES
s/t 12"

GRIT
Diamond 7" EP

ASHKARA
In Silence LP



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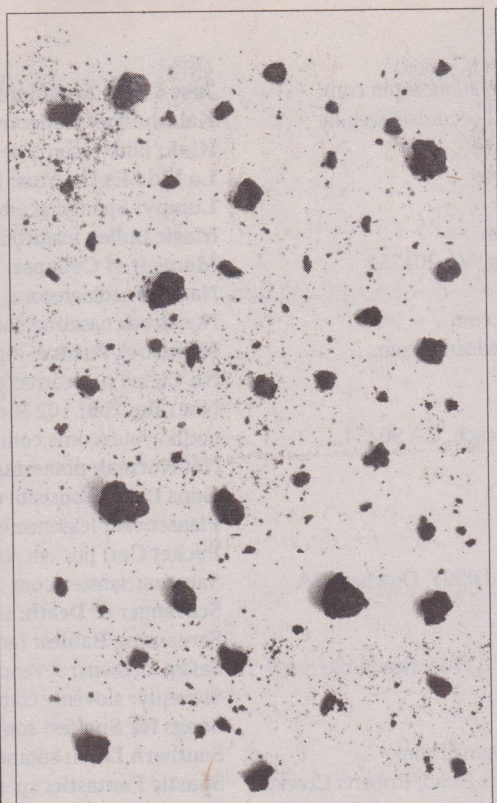

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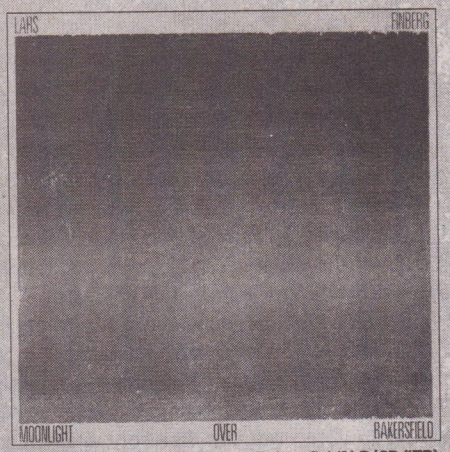

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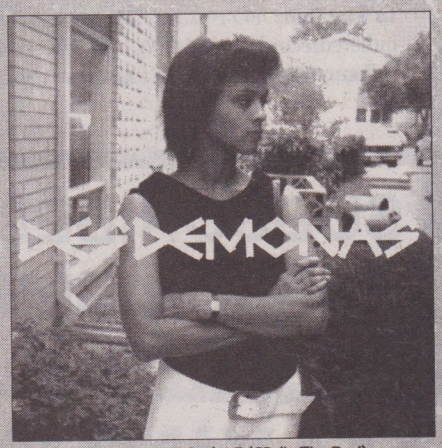

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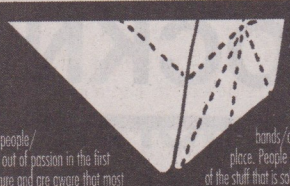

We like to meet people/ bands/art/sport/etc. that
do what they do out of passion in the first place. People who believe in a
underground culture and are aware that most of the stuff that is sold nowadays under
that flag is total crap only made to make money. And, if you feel you can write and relate,
get in touch. To put it with Fugazi's words:

"NEVER MIND WHAT THEY'RE SELLING-
IT'S WHAT YOU ARE BUYING"

DEMOS

All cassettes and CD-Rs are reviewed in this section. Send yours to PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146 USA and include your contact information. Submissions without artwork will not be considered.

(BP) Ben Paulson
(GH) Greg Harvester
(HB) Heather Blotto
(JR) Jason Ryan
(LB) Lourdes June Benavente
(MA) Matt Badenhop
(MD) Michael de Toffoli
(MR) Matt Reynolds
(RS) Ramy Silvan
(WN) Robert Collins

ANTIBODIES – *Demo 2017* – Hailing from Prince Edward Island, ANTIBODIES plays upbeat, melodic, fuzzed-out punk. The vocal style and general tone almost reminds me of garage punk along the lines of the URINALS or JAY REATARD, but played faster. Musically, REDD KROSS comes to mind. This shit is fun, fast and blown out. If folks from Burger Records wanted to pogo and play faster, ANTIBODIES would likely be the result. (BP) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, antibodieschtn.bandcamp.com)

ANXIOUS ARMS – *Never Was* – Solid and professional Central California indie / punk. Like (early) FALL OUT BOY but more emo and introspective. (WN) (6-song CD-R, lyrics not included, kbolla93@gmail.com)

BAD BOYFRIENDS – *Watchin' TV at the Laundrymat* – Little Rock shredders. I feel like I just walked into the punk show and there is a line of people with their arms wrapped around each other, one boot on the edge of stage, and they are wildly bobbing their heads back and forth. At times this tape is so fast and nasty that I feel like it's gonna break my tape player. The vocals sound like they are being shouted into a huge room and make me want to shake my fist in the air even though I have no clue what he is saying. The band gives you some great melodies to hold onto while also constantly throwing in disorienting samples—shredding, creepy shit. They really nailed the sound of a bad boyfriend. (LB) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, badboyfriends.bandcamp.com)

BAD SLEEP – *No Fun* – This is the second release from Olympia's BAD SLEEP, executing sweet power-pop and melodic punk in the vein of FASTBACKS (less guitar acrobatics), PS ELIOT and PARASOL (the singer / guitarist's old band). One of the riffs sounds like it's lifted straight from the VAPORS first LP, which is a good thing. The band is super tight, energetic and every song is nearly flawless. Perfect music for bopping around your bedroom and screaming along. (GH) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, badsleepoly.bandcamp.com)

BLANKET OF M – Straightforward US punk rock, I hear BAD RELIGION and early SOCIAL D in the mix. This band seems to have been active for damn near a decade. Despite that, this still sounds like a starter demo, but in a good way. (WN) (9-song CD-R, lyrics not included, blanketofm.bandcamp.com)

BLOOD NOIZE – *Life of Misery* – Negative, noizey sludge comin' out of Columbus. There's no recognizable structure 'til the third track, which is actually a just a frightening repetitive dirge. So is the fourth for that matter. "Loudmouth" sounds like a MOTÖRHEAD line stuck in a loop in reverse. Nasty. (MA) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, bloodnoize.bandcamp.com)

BLÜ SHORTS – *Blü Wave Music* – Not-so-straightforward, weirdo post punk from Calgary. Lots of effects-pedal experimentation on the guitar and bass operating in rhythmic and mesmerizing ways. The songs are fluid and song-like but not always so structurally recognizable. Why do I keep thinking of PRIMUS? Doesn't sound like them but has some similar quirks. I don't appreciate PRIMUS the way I did in my youth, but this is pretty cool. Fans of uncomfortable arty shit take notice. (MA) (8-song CD-R, lyrics not included, blushorts.bandcamp.com)

BOMB OUT – *Babylon Will Burn* – The band sent this in with another of their demos, and it wasn't clear whether this CD-R was meant as context, or if it was to be reviewed in and of itself. I reviewed it. I'm a glutton. Anyway, hairy hardcore here. It gets way metallic (but no solos). The vocals go super-far back in the throat to a place I'd call guttural, but you might call demonic. Occasionally incredible gang vocals that sound like, no shit, a whole stadium of people singing along. My chief complaint is that much of the demo is spent churning these sort of off-kilter chugga-chugga riffs that follow odd patterns. You can't mosh to them or even bob your head. I guess you could sway disorientedly, but who wants to do that? I don't understand the point. I get it, you're tight. There's some judda-judda parts that are way more punk, and really get good, particularly when the vocalist talks over them instead of yelling, but there aren't enough of those moments to counterbalance the rest. (MR) (8-song CD-R, lyrics not included, bombout@web.de)

BOMB OUT – Chronologically the second demo from this band this month, and this is the better of the two. The formula remains the same: well-practiced metallic hardcore with deep-throated vocals, but here the riffs seem better (more peppy maybe?) and the thickness of the production has now approached Rick Ruben-esque proportions, which is cool. Still not fast enough, but everything fits together well this time around. They've patterned their band name font after JUDGE, but I don't really hear classic US hardcore in this. There's just too much of a metallic edge. Plus, the oddly-timed slow motion pseudo-riffs are still mucking up the works. JUDGE would never do that. REFUSED or HELMET might, though. (MR) (5-song CD-R, lyrics not included, bombout@web.de)

BOOTLICKER – *Six Track EP* – Punks from Kamloops, BC doing it right here! The riffs from UK82 and USHC are never going to reinvent themselves, but when they're done *right*, they sound so good. These riffs bulldoze the door down while the singer does that punch-in-the-gut-style "*oh!*" before launching into a gruff tirade against this fucking shit life. It does the trick and it does it well. Put it on after working a 14 hour day digging ditches and see if your neighborhood is still standing by the end. (GH) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, slow-death-records.bandcamp.com)

CABRAMACABRA – *Truco* – Midway through the second song there's 25 seconds or so that might qualify as folk punk, but that's

DEMOS

about as punk as this shit gets. The rest of the time it's mostly CLAP YOUR HANDS SAY YEAH suspender-indie played at a NEUTRAL MILK HOTEL pace. It's the kind of music that does not have French horns in it, but is definitely created by people who like French horns. Notably, the vocals are buried and distorted to the point of barely being recognizable as vocals. This is probably for the best, because from what can be heard the vocals seem to be whiny, occasionally off-key, and very sensitive, which seems unprofessional. In fact, the whole demo can be viewed as an exercise in disguising crappy vocals. Note, though, that when the vocals are successfully suppressed, there's a sort of NPR syrupy bliss to the whole endeavor. I think these people could definitely make a demo I would really like, but they didn't do it here. Maybe add French horns? (MR) (4-song CD-R, lyrics not included, cabramacabra.bandcamp.com)

CADAVERETTE – Strange Maine strikes again. Hailing from Portland, CADAVERETTE will leave your ass in the fucking dust scratching your head. Technical, yet crushing and heavy. Tight, dissonant hardcore collides with spazzy jazz moments and anthemic metal to create a destructive wall of controlled noise. Their singer Reesa ties it all together with an insane voice that is equal parts black metal howl and a cathartic growling release of intensity. Pretty nutso and totally great. (GH) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, reesawood@gmail.com, cadaverette.bandcamp.com)

CAUSA – Political hardcore punk band from Los Angeles that harbors all the brown anger and rage that comes with being such a place (having grown up there myself, I should know.) Vocals switch from shouted, growled, and screamed, with frantic guitar and drum work adding to their chaotic feel. Dual vocalists only adds to the franticness and urgency. Lyrical content is about the representation and organization of QPOC, with lines like "*exclude us because we're queer / distort our history / dismissing our involvement / defacing our identity / we must bridge together being queer punx of color!*" Getting total ANTISCHISM and NAUSEA vibes and that's dope 'cause I'm all about it. (RS) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, causapunx.bandcamp.com)

CHARLIE'S STRIPE / MALA VISTA – CHARLIE'S STRIPE is from northern Italy while MALA VISTA is from Brooklyn and both offer up two songs. CHARLIE'S STRIPE is definitely coming from a background of '80s power-pop (NERVES / SHOES) with an emphasis on the pop. They remind me of early FIGGS at times, but a bit more polished. MALA VISTA is more rough around the edges and have a harder, streetwise punk sound... again informed by power-pop, but also the grittiness of '77 punk and DIY basement shows. Both are good, but MALA VISTA has a little more meat to bite into. (GH) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, wfbr.storenvy.com)

CHILL PARENTS – Starts out with a totally tripped out electronic sound collage before diving straight into the slightly-off, gritty pop punk dirt. It's unstoppable, gross, and intermittently melodic—striking that elusive balance between silly and cynical. Could it possibly even be influenced by HICKEY? Are you an angry, hurt, politically engaged, and incredibly stinky human being, but sometimes when you get exactly the right amount of drunk, you remember that life is a fucking miracle, and your friends are fucking heroes, and punk music is fucking perfect? Then this might be the tape for you. Just be ready for things to get real weird in a bad acid trip sort of way on Side B. (HB) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, chillparents.bandcamp.com)

CIVILIZED CANNIBALS – *Feast Like Animals* – Seems weird to make a concept band just to pretend you are from 1992, but that's what these San Diego kids appear to have done, only this band is connected somehow to an entire concept presentation surrounding a fictional town of Sweetville. Peppy melodic punk that does a good job of recreating the shit punk meets mall punk vibe that was oh-so-very prevalent during that lost era, so I guess the homage is a success. Vocals have a shrill timbre that takes some getting used to, and the overall recording is open and loose sounding not unlike RUDIMENTARY PENI. Music aside, the "label" website is well worth getting lost in for a while. (WN) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, secretsoftheweird.com)

CONFIRMATION – ++++ – Do you like post-punk? This band does for sure. There are some serious GANG OF FOUR vibes here, but not all of the time. Cool, dark, and surfy guitar riffs bury the gruff and staccato vocals. Some of the songs are uncomfortable and sound like a power struggle between instruments. It feels messy at times and can be repetitive. Majority of the songs end abruptly and leave me feeling indifferent. (LB) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, confirmationpunk.bandcamp.com)

CRACKED EYE – A nice cross section of hardcore stylings with raspy vocals from this London, Ontario group. Pogos, breakdowns, mid-tempos, and full-throttling all purveyed with crunchy guitars and exceptional drumming. Fairly predictable songs but tough and fiery. My tape is warbly so I referred to the Bandcamp page. (MA) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, crackedeyelondon.bandcamp.com)

CRYPT SEEKER – *Demo* – As you may guess from the name, this tape is pretty metal. Hailing from Ohio, CRYPT SEEKER plays rock'n'roll and thrash-influenced metal. Some moments are more mid-tempo and melodic which seem to be influenced by the likes of JUDAS PRIEST while the faster moments bring CELTIC FROST to mind. If galloping-rhythms and shredding leads are your thing, you'll probably like this demo. (BP) (3-song cassette, lyrics not included, cryptseeker.bandcamp.com)

DAS DRIP – A chaotic slam from North Carolina that has many of the wild and unhinged characteristics of the first MEAT PUPPETS EP. Frantic drumming surrounded by a whirlwind of bumbling bass, jangly guitars and biting vocals. It's more about the intensity than riffs. Truly manic and awesome. (MA) (9-song cassette, lyrics included, dasdrip.bandcamp.com)

EAR – *Into the Canal* – Ann Arbor rockers playing what I can only describe as butt-rock as they channel ZZ TOP and VAN HALEN filtered through a lo-fi lens, and place some forced falsetto vocals over the top of it. It's hard to tell if they're joking or not with only two songs, but don't worry, they sent in a second tape. (GH) (2-song cassette, lyrics not included, earitis.bandcamp.com)

EAR – *Outta the Canal* – Yep...(See their other review)...more rock'n'roll-inspired punk. Somewhere between TIGHT BROS FROM WAY BACK WHEN and '80s rock with those same over-the-top falsetto vocals. On the closer, "I Got A Feelin' (or Two)," the singer drops the falsetto and the band jams out on some dissonant limbs, which I found more engaging. (GH) (3-song cassette, lyrics not included, earitis.bandcamp.com)

EMERGED – Brooding Malaysian quartet, playing epic and emotive stadium crust. The TRAGEDY influence is clear, and EMERGED focus heavily on the guitar melodies while the low end plows through simple but effective D-beat. Vocals are rough and desperate, probably tired from competing with the thunderous drums in the mix. (WN) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, emerged.punk@gmail.com, emergedpunk666.bandcamp.com)

HARMLESS MANIACS – An interesting entry into the world of powerful misanthropic modern hardcore, Serbia's HARMLESS MANICS drop two doses of supreme

punishment with odd time changes and an overwhelmingly devastating impact. The slowdown in "Diary Of Pig" is pure hate. Into it. (WN) (2-song 3" CD-R, lyrics included, pmkrec@yahoo.com, pmkrecords.bandcamp.com)

HASH REDACTOR – I'm really into this one. Memphis rockers playing something between post-punk and garage rock with a very stripped down, raw sound. They have the guitar tone of the RIP OFFS with a bit of a smarter sound, like when TOTAL CONTROL actually plays punk music. It's not unlike they're playing off of the blueprint of early Goner heavy hitters, but updating it for the youth of today. Member of NOTS, for those who care. (GH) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, hashredactor.bandcamp.com)

INNOCENT – *Power Hungry and Mindless* – Goddamn, this shit rips! INNOCENT plays thundering and relentless D-beat that doesn't fall into the monotonous traps many other bands of this genre do. The riffs are ferocious and memorable, the rhythm section is unrelenting and the vocals (think ELECTRIC DEADS) really set INNOCENT apart. I love D-beat but I'll be the first to say that a lot of D-beat bands are boring—this is not the case with INNOCENT. The songwriting is interesting and thoughtful and kept my interest the whole time by incorporating catchy vocal delivery, great fills, finely executed starts / stops and the perfect amount of guitar leads. I also appreciate the lyrics which appear to be critical against the prison industrial complex, the police and the state as a whole. This demo is great! (BP) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, innocentpunk.bandcamp.com)

INTERCISION – *NO* – Whoa. This thing starts with machine gun blasts and only gets more intense from there. Ferocious and unapologetically political Portland punk in the fine tradition of bands like AUS ROTTEN and AXIOM. These kids are shit hot fire lyrically and musically. The sound is massive and the pace is as relentless as the message. This one is a killer. (WN) (9-song cassette, lyrics included, intercisionpunk@gmail.com, intercision.bandcamp.com)

JUST BUSTED – Yes, yes, yes! Every second of this demo by Oakland's JUST BUSTED is a jittery, catchy, tight earworm that sounds so perfect blasting out of the boombox at a backyard party. Bass lines *fucking fly* over each song, completely locking in with the drums to make that kind of rhythm section that most punk bands would die for. Two guitars crank out ultra-catchy riffs while the singer brings so much energy to each song in a way that recalls those first couple of FLESHIES albums. I can't recommend this enough. (GH) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, justbusted.bandcamp.com)

KALIK – *Disapproved* – These Danes do a really good job of making slick, catchy shits sound dirty and relevant. Snappy tracks like "Nothing There" come off like a powerful fist to the face, and the straight ska / punk of "Polizei" is an apologetic winner. Imagine LEFTÖVER CRACK as an urgent Eastern European punk band like INNOXIA CORPORA. (WN) (5-song CD-R, lyrics not included, kalik.bandcamp.com)

KNIFE RIDER – Kentucky shock-rock about drugs, women, and not working. Like a trashed-out and more garage (early) TURBONEGRO / PAGANS with DWARVES / GG ALLIN sensibility. Hissed vocals over a lo-fi punk stomp that is awesomely primitive and raw. "Dixiewrekt" is a new term to me (meaning fucked up on speed) and is probably the winner on here, while "Freerider" is a close second. Ashamed to say I like it more than I want to. (MA) (5-song CD-R, lyrics included, kniferider.bandcamp.com)

KONTAKTA – Man, I don't think I'll ever be able to detach the word "cunt" from its most-often associated misogynist intention (over on this continent anyway) – thankfully "Cunt Parade" is a stark criticism of rich people in power. Southampton's KONTAKTA is a burly sounding, fiercely political crust band, not too far off from other classic groups from the island such as DOOM or OI POLLOI. The more mid-tempo tracks sound like the PIST. Anti-war and pro-animal rights. You've heard it all before, yet the madness continues… (MA) (5-song CD-R, lyrics included, kontakta.bandcamp.com)

LATCHSTRING – *Solstice* – I'm having a hard time justifying obvious and excellent '90s emotional punk references (the band blatantly pays homage to Sarah Kirsch in the music and their bio), with equally glaring modern commercial sounding indie "punk" stuffs. I'll accept the parts that I like and write the mainstream thoughts off to the band's exceptional songwriting / musicianship and the overall "professional" sound of the recording…because the songs are really good, and delivered with a virulent capital "L" Labo(u)r anti-Trump bent. To be continued... (WN) (4-song CD-R, lyrics included, thecultculture.bandcamp.com, latchstring.bandcamp.com)

LAZARDS – *Beautiful Release* – Hailing from Helsinki, Finland, LAZARDS spend a significant amount of time in a tender, indie singer-songwriter corner while confidently strutting to the center of some harder '80s-inspired scene. Imagine BILLY IDOL meets DAVID BOWIE on a dark dancefloor territory. Relaxing, dreamy and a little psychedelic. (HB) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, lazards.bandcamp.com)

MASSGRAV – *Stockholm Rockers* – Latest from long-running Swedish hardcore band. Do you know that muscle drummers have? That forearm one that gets all big from playing drums for a long time, but must have no function in other realms of modern human life, because norms don't have it? Well, this fucker's drum muscle must be popping out something fierce! The drumming on *Stockholm Rockers* is *sooooo* fast and intense! Drum speed varies from double time (yawn) to quadruple time (ultrafast). There's the occasional RAMONES-speed beat thrown in to keep your ears honest, but even then, the crazy fills! Beyond drums, the riffs are straightforward, which is to their benefit. The songs are short, which is also to their benefit. The vocals are overlapping shouting, which is, um, fine. The album's got a glossy sheen that I associate with European hardcore, but that might just be because I know this is European hardcore. I humbly suggest track fourteen as deserving of your attention. (MR) (24-song CD-R, lyrics included, massgrav.com)

MAXIMUM ERNST – *Presents Max Ernst Daniel Carter Trio* – Experimental freaky jazz jam with guitar, sax, and drums. Indie record store clerks put stuff like this on to out-snob their patrons. More fun to play than listen to, I suspect. (MA) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, maximumernst.bandcamp.com)

MOON BLOOD – *Cramp* – Described by their label as "raging femme pogo punk" from Las Vegas, NV, most of the tracks on this tape seem too fast to pogo to, unless there's some new development I missed in practicing that dance move. It's fast enough for hardcore! Aggressive riffs with confrontational but sensitive lyrics. While the energy does come across on the recording, I have a feeling there's something amazing and challenging this band does live that can't translate to the chill home-listening experience. (HB) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, moonbloodlv.bandcamp.com)

NOSFERATU – *The 'A Compound' Sessions* – Fucking nutso, fast, thrashing hardcore from Texas (like you don't already know that). Like a lost NEOS or KORO demo. Fuck everything, smash it up, eat shit, and kill the president. *Perfection.* Tapes are already gone I guess. Too bad for you. (MA) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, solution.storenvy.com)

DEMOS

PEPPER KINGS – *Shave the Leg* – Keyboard-drenched, mid-tempo schlock. I assume it's supposed to be a joke, but it kinda sounds like a dad band recycling a bunch of inside jokes. The title track is as childishly misogynistic as the name implies, but the verses of "Blimp Driver" deliver a nice garage stomp. (WN) (4-song CD-R, lyrics not included, tarbeachmusic.com)

PERVERSE OSMOSIS – *Vale Of the Basilisk: DM's Choice* – Über weird "dungeon thrash" (which apparently is a genre). Lightning fast and spastic rudimentary fastcore with what seems like a pop punk bent and a fascination with role playing games. Carnival keyboards blast into a few tracks, and I keep having FAT DAY flashbacks while I listen. I don't know how much time I would spend in the fantasy world that PERVERSE OSMOSIS create, but high energy rudimentary punk is always worth repeat visits. (WN) (10-song CD-R, lyrics not included, perverseosmosis.com)

PROTRUDERS – *Steaming Pile / Dance Dancing Ape* – Yeah! Fuck yeah! Toronto's PROTRUDERS are a breath of fresh air coming from a seemingly cold, moldy basement. They channel ELECTRIC EELS, the NERVES and crude basement punk to bring you ten blasts of fuzz covered, feedback laden punk that seems to lack any pretension or thoughts of "cool." There are a few cover songs on here, but the band does a good job of putting their own mark on each and they (the songs) fit well into the rest of the tape. It feels loose and free in a way that many bands try to emulate but so few get it right like this. (GH) (10-song cassette, lyrics not included, protruders.bandcamp.com)

PUBLIC SPEAKERS – *Planet for Transients* – This just sounds like late '90s pop punk to me, like a low-budget Lookout offshoot with some leanings towards SCARED OF CHAKA and PLOW UNITED. In some songs they try for some quirky, off-tempo tricks that just make the whole thing sound clunky, but when they keep it simple, the songs come off as memorable and catchy. It's weird that it came without a tape cover, but I've seen worse. (GH) (11-song cassette, lyrics not included, publicspeakers.bandcamp.com)

PUCKER UP – *I Live in Your Mouth* – Boston experimental music that has an undercurrent of noise but stays focused on tangible and mostly accessible song structures. Explosions of erratic guitar in places remind me of that wild, live SONIC YOUTH tape on Ecstatic Peace from 1984. There are also traces of hip-hop, tripped out no-wave, fucked up punk and blippy space jams. (GH) (9-song cassette, lyrics not included, crasslipsrecords.bandcamp.com)

REXMANNINGDAY. – *Demo* – Its 2017 and your favorite emo sounds from the late '90s are still fucking killing it. It is so dope to be able to have a band that captures a quintessential sound all in one tape that doesn't feel forced. This feels like I actually bought it in 1997. All the instruments shine through and have their moments in the sun. The songs are played pretty fast and are very melodic, with lots of change ups that are tied in with all the right drum fills. The entire tape is amazing and so goddamn catchy. Personal favorite tracks are definitely "There You Are" and "The Starting Line." They wrap it all up with a cover of "Coming Clean" by the GET UP KIDS, which is so telling to what inspired this band to form. If you are into the GET UP KIDS, JIMMY EAT WORLD, and that first HOT ROD CIRCUIT record check this band out! (RS) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, rexmanningday.oly@gmail.com, realrexmanningday.bandcamp.com)

ROSY – A "posthumous release of a short lived Buffalo band," eh? Mid-tempo hardcore crunch *à la* good-era FUCKED UP meets the more rock elements of NEW BOMB TURKS. They make a brief foray into some more kick-back vibes before a pounding fast number at the end. Perty good. (MA) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, rosyrosy.bandcamp.com)

SBDC – *Too Bad* – Rough around the edges, SBDC shows up to the party with a twelve-pack of rock'n'roll punk riffs (OK there's actually only eight songs on here but it's totally believable that they drank the other four in the van on the way over). The vibe is trashy and fun, accented with self-deprecation, melodic group vocals, and that intermittent deadpan delivery. (HB) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, sbdc.bandcamp.com)

SCANNER – *Under the Devil's Tail* – Long running Pittsburgh rockers (since 1979, according to them) with four pieces of tasty old school punk. Late '70s SoCal punk retooled for and / or by fifty-somethings who still jam X and SOCIAL DISTORTION with fervor with vocals that add a snotty NYC flavor. (WN) (4-song CD-R, lyrics not included, scanner1979.com)

SEDATIVE – This tape compiles two demos from this Washington DC hardcore band and shows their progression over a year. The first demo is straight ahead USHC that had me thinking of BORN AGAINST with the vocals. I didn't really wanna make that comparison, but then they covered "Half Mast" on the second demo. On their second demo, the band is a little tighter, dipping into some raging fastcore and every song rips! Excellent shit! (GH) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, sedativeusa.bandcamp.com)

SLEEPING BAG – *Wet* – Slacker rock from Bloomington, IN, released on Let's Pretend Records. There is something *magnetic* about this tape. I've listened to it several times—a few times while crying (it ruled), and a few times while I was pumped up on caffeine and felt great (it still ruled). Some very bass driven songs you can easily find yourself dancing to. The lead vocals are gentle and sound like staring out a car window on a rainy drive. Some tracks contain those cool extended synth notes... or are they vocals draped in spooky effects? It's calm, it's thoughtful, it's a lot of fun, and it's real good. (LB) (12-song cassette, lyrics not included, sleepingbag.bancamp.com)

SLOW FACTION – *Under Heavy Manners* – Brilliantly executed UK punk rock in the spirit of the first couple of waves of the good shit, like EDDIE & THE HOTRODS re-tuned for the '10s. There are already a couple of EPs on Longshot, but this demo is my introduction, and it's a good one. "There's A War Going On" is this reviewer's choice track. (WN) (6-song CD-R, lyrics included, slowfaction.bandcamp.com)

SLUGS – *Don't* – Stream of consciousness... shifting moods in explosions of mathy drumming freakout...suddenly slipping into avant-garde...lots of reverb on the vocals... what is even happening? These people are obviously really competent. They alternate at times between electro-pop, then minimalism, and aggressive over-engineered time signatures. Is that a keyboard or a Theremin? When things get a little funky and maybe into a groove with rock riffs is it still punk? Or just a weird dream? (HB) (11-song cassette, lyrics not included, slugsondrugs.bandcamp.com)

SPACE CAMP – *Force Femmed* – Freak-heavy art school psych-punk mania with horns and keyboards and a piano. And a tuba, apparently. It's manic, it's weird as shit, and half of the tracks sound more like compositions than songs, but with screamo vocals desperately competing with the dumpster fire of a band for the listeners' attention. True and actual freaks. (WN) (10-song CD-R, lyrics not included, spacecampthc@gmail.com)

STIMULUS – *El Estímulo Previsto* – Japanese punk sung in Spanish? Why not? Catchy and fast punk not unlike PERSEVERE or KRUW, but with a super raw and blown-out lo-fi recording. Two bouncing rippers and two monstrous mid-tempo cuts. Basically this fucking rules. (MA) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, discostingatinga.bandcamp.com)

STRANGER THAN FACT – *Magnetic* – Sounds like bedroom demos of some '90s

indie / grunge band that was lost in the shuffle of time. The drums swing hard, and Xania's vocals are shrill and powerful. It is easy to imagine a different world in which this was merely the first step in some weird tabloid drenched career...but maybe it is. Keyboard / piano heavy, and a stripped YEAH YEAH YEAHS vibe, but mixed with some other freak elements that hold my interest throughout. (WN) (11-song CD-R, lyrics not included, strangerthanfact.bandcamp.com)

TONY JONES & THE JERKTONES – *Ubiquitous Postmortem* – Tongue in cheek (?) zombie country cowpunk. Dude's warble is pretty legit, and these dudes would be your "cool" uncle's rockabilly band if you lived in the same town. (WN) (5-song CD-R, lyrics not included, tonyjones.org)

THE TORTURED – *Bottom Of the Bay* – This shit is classic Bay Area punk rock. I see these guys on flyers two or four times a month and it really shows with this record. The TORTURED return with a polished and consistent release that has the same flavor as their first full length, but with a definitive thread that reflects the amount of time that these scene warriors have been perfecting their music. They've made a steady hook-driven banger with a few solid ballads sprinkled in to break it up, but still commit to every song, forcibly driving home an adrenaline-pulsing, fist-pumping hook. In the same spirit as the LOOKOUTS or CRIMPSHRINE, they would have easily been a crowd favorite at Aitos back in the day. I think this is their breakout, with raunchy guitars, creative jazz-influenced, busy bass lines, really clean and solid popping drums, and a diverse mixture of clean harmonies and dirty gang chants to keep the melodies easy to move to. They're definitely in their element and they definitely know where they want to be. (MD) (12-song CD-R, lyrics included, thetortured.bandcamp.com)

TRUMAN – *Ma Doi* – Heavy, moody metalcore band from Richmond, Virginia. The holyland of early 2000s crust infused metal...or screamo. This tape one hundred percent does that scene justice. It's awesome to be able to put a tape on in 2017 and still hear the influences of PAGENINETYNINE and MAJORITY RULE. TRUMAN certainly nods at their scene's predecessors, while carving out their own place. Lots of restrained guitar and bass work into a controlled chugged chaos. The vocals are manic, ranging from throaty screams and deep growls. This tape is beautiful in all its chaos and noise. (RS) (3-song cassette, lyrics not included, trumanrva.bandcamp.com)

VACANCY – *Empty Head* – Mid-paced hardcore with grungy riffs. The vocals are mostly shouted and have a fair amount of echo, so it sounds like someone is shouting at you from far away. I spent a lot of time trying to figure out if there was a bass on this recording, or just a low-sounding guitar. Not sure. Anyway, I'm registering some similarities to *Rohnert Park*-era CEREMONY, but VACANCY might not see it that way. This is intense stuff, but the hooks aren't grabbing me. Much better when you turn your Walkman all the way up. (MR) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, vacancyfl.bandcamp.com)

WEST JERSEY AIRPORT – Do you like the MELVINS? I do. So does WEST JERSEY AIRPORT. They sound specifically like demo outtakes from *Gluey Porch Treatments* and *Ozma*. When it doesn't sound like that, it sounds like an improvised bong-hit jam, not unlike HAWKWIND. I like it. (GH) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, westjerseyairport.bandcamp.com)

THE XILES – Rudimentary east coast punk, bits of DCHC, and somehow it reminds me of TILT at the same time. A faster pace would help to hide what are genuinely basic riffs, but the urgency is still there. Negative points for including a band bio and promo pack that talks about how punk today needs to "magnify the current issues affecting the world," while not including lyrics. (WN) (7-song CD-R, lyrics not included, thexilesband@gmail.com, thexiles.bandcamp.com)

V/A – *Enjoy Poserton* – This is a new, excellent compilation from some town called Poserton (I couldn't find it on a map). You can enjoy tracks from bands like FRET, PUBESCENTS, the TICT, PUNCH DRUNK O'MALLEYS and more, who run the gamut of many subgenres of punk. Do you like pop punk, Oi!, street punk, DEAD KENNEDYS-worship and other shit from the middle of nowhere? There are no throwaway tracks here. It sounds like each band put everything they had into their songs, as if it was the only song they'd ever write. It's *unreal*. Excellent cover art to boot! A true labor of hate here. (GH) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, lifeisposers.bigcartel.com)

DESTRUCTURE ǂ WINTER 2017

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ZINES

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(GJ) Griffin Jones
(GM) Gina Murrell
(JD) Joan DeToro
(RH) Ryan Hertel

CUL-DE-SAC #7
$3 / 48 pgs
This is the first issue of Julie Halpern and Liz Mason's dual-perzine in twenty years, and it is a must have! Find it now and read it a couple times. Then, anticipate future issues! It's not a crazy concept that you get better with practice, and after decades of living and writing about it, these two zinesters are pretty damn good at it. I popped hard for the Tommy Wiseau reference in an essay about an unironic love of the Ancient Aliens TV show and got all sentimental about Doctor Who during a David Tennant love fest essay. The (mostly) serious articles about the birth and death of an adult D&D group and the awful experience of having multiple miscarriages are un-put-downable. It's the celebration of all life throws at you tone of the zine that makes it acceptable to put those two subjects next to each other. More than anything, this zine has given me two life goals: make shitty things better and be fun at parties. (RH)
PO Box 477553, Chicago, IL 60647 / juliehalpern.com / lizmasonIsawesome.com

EVALUATE WHAT YOU TOLERATE
$5 / 60 pgs
Well done zine portion of the recent project where 50 Bay Area bands came together to raise money for the Oakland based Anti Police-Terror Project (APTP). When every week seems to have a barrage of fucked up news, this is a good reminder that the best and most effective work is being done by people in their communities. This zine includes an interview with Cat Brooks of APTP (that was also in *MRR* #415), an anti-doxing guide for activists facing attacks from the alt-right, and shorter pieces on a myriad of groups that work to meet people's everyday needs and combat state violence. (JA)
evaluatewhatyoutolerate@gmail.com / evaluatewhatyoutolerate.bandcamp.com

HASTA LAS ULTIMAS CONSECUENCIAS DE UNA VIDA INTENSA #0
$1 / 12 pgs
Slim but dense zine out of the Tijuana DIY scene. A noisy comic sermon of a slimy "wise man" (you know the type) who is some kind of sketchy rehab coach. Drippy and weird with meticulous texture. Like Jodorowsky's *Panic Fables* but powerviolence and chill. All clocks are set to zero. (AK)
browntrash664@hotmail.com / facebook.com/browntrash664

LEVANDE BEGRAVD #7
€5 / 30 pgs
This is almost perfect for me. While there are some ho-hum interviews with local punk bands, with, you know, *those* questions, I was engaged in their quest to find info on an elusive band, Velo, which made me look them up (they're killer and weird and right up my alley). There's a scratching of the surface on UK DIY bedroom pop which I thought was gonna blow chunks, but this piece focused mainly on seriously super rad shit from '78–'81 and I am super stoked on most of the bands I just discovered. A healthy dose of record reviews of shit I never heard of. This is a good little read. They totally succeeded in turning me onto some different shit instead of boring the fuck out of me. If the interviews were a little better, this would be fucking perfect. Keep sending these! (DZ)
Marko Gillingsmark, Fruktträdsgatan 1, Göteborg, Sweden

MISHAP #36
$2 or trade / 36 pgs
Good, relatable (to this 40ish white dude) punk rock anarchist personal zine. Ryan looks back on his last decade and a half—protests of Operation Iraqi Freedom; the powerlessness and frustration that followed; radicals being undermined by liberals; radicals being undermined by their own naivety; doing political work where he could; finding hope through the work of Movement for Black Lives. He provides a highly readable / well thought out tying together of multiple strands of the fucked up world we are facing and how he deals with it. The reading list, the reflections on sexual objectification *vis-à-vis* breast cancer awareness, discovering his own sense of self / gender / sexuality, relationships, going to protests—all are interconnected. Ryan does a great job of conveying this and building off it for an inspiring and interesting issue. (JA)
PO Box 5841 Eugene OR 97405 / mishapzine@yahoo.com

MISHAP #37
$1 or trade / 24 pgs
This issue of this "punk rock anarchist personal zine" is mostly a journal ranging from February to October on 2017, a short essay on social media, and some book recommendations. It's a very enjoyable read from a very talented writer with both humorous and thoughtful insight. Definitely a zine that would be fun to follow issue to issue. A brief section spelling out how dead on the satire and hyperbole of Reagan Youth are in our current times also punched me right in the gut. (RH)
mishapzine@yahoo.com / PO Box 5841, Eugene, OR 97405

NATIONAL TEENSET OUTSIDER #34
$1 or trade / free to prisoners / 36 pgs
Halloween issue of this quarter-sized Rochester zine focused on the trash / pop culture side of punk. Pieces on early 20th century true crime, haunted houses, horror movies, the occult, etc. There's an interview with the Gangrel, an attitude-era pro wrestler whose shtick seems to be vampire based and who was in one of the Human Centipede movies. There is a radio component that I didn't get to check out and it seems

like it's written by a whole crew. I don't want to defer to damning with faint praise but it says a lot that this wasn't cringe-worthy to someone whose tastes are far more on the pretentious jerk side. (JA)
W. Carroll 32 Edmonds #1 Rochester NY 14609 / etsy.com/shop/rochesterteenset

NESTING #3
$3 / 8 pgs
Nesting #3 is about revenge. "If you don't take revenge / on your oppressors / it will be / difficult for you to feel human again" it says on the cover. In this zine, created by Alex Speaks, revenge takes the form of castrating and starving sexual violators, late-night fantasies "about killing my enemies" with sharp objects and watching a particular enemy "bleed through his eyes as his life falls out of him," and a five-part conversation with a mother about an uncle and grandfather who acted inappropriately and whose conduct pushes the writer "to commit an act of retaliation." Due to the unabashedly graphic subject matter, *Nesting* #3 has a content warning for rape culture & violence. This zine is dripping with hurt and anger: "If someone has never felt the urgent need, almost physiological, for revenge, it's probably because nothing very intense has ever happened to them." Those who lust for revenge will likely find release by reading *Nesting* #3. (GM)
Alex Speaks, 28 Locust Street Apt 204, Brooklyn, NY 11206

PLASTIC NOTES NEWSLETTER #2
2 Euros / 40 pgs
Plastic Notes is a zine-style newsletter released by members of the Helsinki power-pop band Plastic Tones. Plastic Tones' songs are great, and it was a pleasant surprise to recognize them as the creators of Plastic Notes. The zine is almost entirely in Finnish, a language I do not speak, but I gather it is about touring and interviewing bands from abroad. There are two brief interviews in English, one with Tenement and another with Copenhagen's Planet Y. *Plastic Notes* looks really good and is put together neatly, but I recommend you speak Finnish if you plan to read it. Definitely check out the band! (GJ)
Teen Wolf Records Fleminginkatu 11, 00530 Helsinki, Finland / plastictones@gmail.com / www.facebook.com/plastictones

RAZORCAKE #101
$4 / 112 pgs
My problems with *Razorcake* are always the same, but to be honest, they're getting much better at addressing those problems anyway. Sure, they aren't incredibly political, and their rules on what to cover and review are much looser than *MRR*, but that can be a plus, as this issue focused on a few musicians most D-beat dunces might not have on their immediate radar, like Phranc and Sammus, which is something I think is pretty important. Sure, there's a fifteen page story on professional wrestling, and a few comics that took about ten minutes to go from first brain splurt to final ink squirt, but there's also a pretty badass talk with Mike Watt, a few good columns (including a killer one on how many families are affected by that mother fucking asshole piece of shit who should fucking kill himself Trump and his Muslim ban, even if they aren't from the few countries included on the list), and a ton of reviews of records, demos, zines, and books. Killer issue. (DZ)
PO Box 42129 Los Angeles, CA 90042 / razorcake.org

SUPER COOL #6
$3 / 26 pgs
Pretty cute story about the experiences one punk had on their trip to Riot Fest. What would have normally been an intense yawner was made pretty killer with comics covering ridiculous food, wingnuts encountered, and even a few spot on jabs at most of the aging entertainers. A good goofy light read. Recommended, and please don't stop, because I really liked it. (DZ)
rickyvigil@gmail.com

THE TROUBLE WITH NORMAL #151
$2 / 52 pgs
Here we have the 25 year commemorative issue of *The Trouble With Normal*. Whether you're impressed at the commitment of someone putting out 150 issues of a zine out of Columbia, MO for 25 years, or wish he would've paid more attention to photo editing and spruced up the layout even a little during that time, you have to applaud the effort. This issue takes a look back via snippets of interviews with Fugazi and DOA, a not-quite-as-old Avengers / Pansy Division show review among others. I jumped up in my seat when I saw the Gil Scott-Heron show review from 1993 (in which Boone compares Vanilla Ice to Billy Ray Cyrus, and having no idea how prophetic that was going to be with the latter's offspring). As far as current day stuff: there's a decent interview with Lawrence's Psychic Heat, numerous show and record reviews, and other goodies. (DG)
PO Box 1444, Columbia, MO 65205-1444

TRUST #186
€3 / 66 pgs
Whoa, this zine got an experimental, arty layout makeover. This time around, we get interviews from Sneeze Attack, Penny Rimbaud, Lebenden Toten, Zonenpunk, and Alice Bag. Other than that, the usual reviews, and some nice photos! (DG)
Dolf Hermannstadter / Postfach 11 07 62 / 28087 Bremen / Germany

WE DON'T WANT YOUR CANDY
$5 / 20 pgs
Bilingual comics collection from Mexico City via Montréal. Packs of punks roaming around and yelling, reading Julie Doucet, being alone in a new city, all rendered in a definitive high-contrast style. The comic mocking "PC punks" with a joke about "accidental blackface" misses the mark and leaves an unnecessarily sour taste, interrupting the surreal girl gang flow of the rest of the zine. (AK)
lisatoldme@gmail.com / lisaevelynczech.tumblr.com

WHERE YOU FROM? #5
$5 / 56 pgs
A limited travelogue of Louisiana, *Where You From?* #5 explores connections to adopted hometowns and places of origin. Hope, having lived for an indeterminate amount of time in Oakland, CA, moves back to Louisiana with Andy. Andy's family is in Louisiana. Hope's is in New Hampshire ("I have maple syrup and the scent of dry leaves in my blood"). Hope left New England for the Gulf Coast, where she presumably went to college and met Andy; later, the two move to California and reside in Oakland, which "was so loud I feel like I can't ever get enough quiet now." Deciding to pick up again, they exchange the clamor of Oakland for the renowned quietude of New Orleans, from which Hope commutes to Baton Rouge for work. The bulk of *Where You From?* #5 is Hope's observations from this commute: railroad tracks and sunsets, truck stops and cypress trees, strip malls and spoonbills. Included with this zine is a fold-out, two-color map of Hope's routine journey between the two Louisiana cities. (GM)
Hope, PO Box 792832, New Orleans, LA 70179

ZINEBEAT #1
16 pgs
For a cover and table of contents promoting JUST BUSTED and SHELLSHAG, it's pretty disappointing to find just one page that only shows two album covers, the release dates, and bandcamp URLs. It would have required minimal effort to provide even the slightest bit of

SƎNIZ

commentary. What's the point of including something as a feature of a zine when it literally is just leading to the internet? The closest we get are six teen magazine style questionnaires from six members from the two bands with questions such as "Favorite food?" and "Most embarrassing moment?" I understand the intent, but it comes off underwhelming, like my brain was aching for something of substance. The "trading cards" did make me laugh though. This zine's first issue is a rough start, but I'd definitely be interested in seeing future issues if it can expand and improve on the intent here. (RH)
zinebeatzine@gmail.com

1755 BEIJOS GREGOS
5 Euros / 34 pgs
1755 Beijos Gregos (*1755 Rim Jobs*) is the first fanzine for Portugal's Vaiapraia. The zine comes accompanied by a tape of the band's latest release, *1755*. The zine's eerily depressive images (collages of childish scrawls, song lyrics, smiley faces, old letters, Facebook posts, etc.) easily complement the band's dark garage sound and meandering songs. It's mostly in Portuguese, a language I don't speak, but I was still able to appreciate the heavy Courtney Love and Liz Phair fandom and simple sketches of depression. There's a lot of pretty open-ended existential exploration going on in *1755 Beijos Gregos*. It looks great, was clearly made with care, and definitely succeeds in pulling you into its mysterious world. (GJ)
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YOU DON'T KNOW TIM

But maybe you did. April 3, 2018 will mark twenty years since the founder of *Maximum Rocknroll*, Tim Yohannan, died. If you've got stories—the good, the bad, and the typically Tim Yo, we'd love to read and publish them.

No stories? No worries! We'd also love more high resolution photos of Tim. Background, foreground, we wanna see 'em.

Please submit to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com by February 5, 2018 to have your submission considered.

Note: No submissions from Green Day will be accepted.